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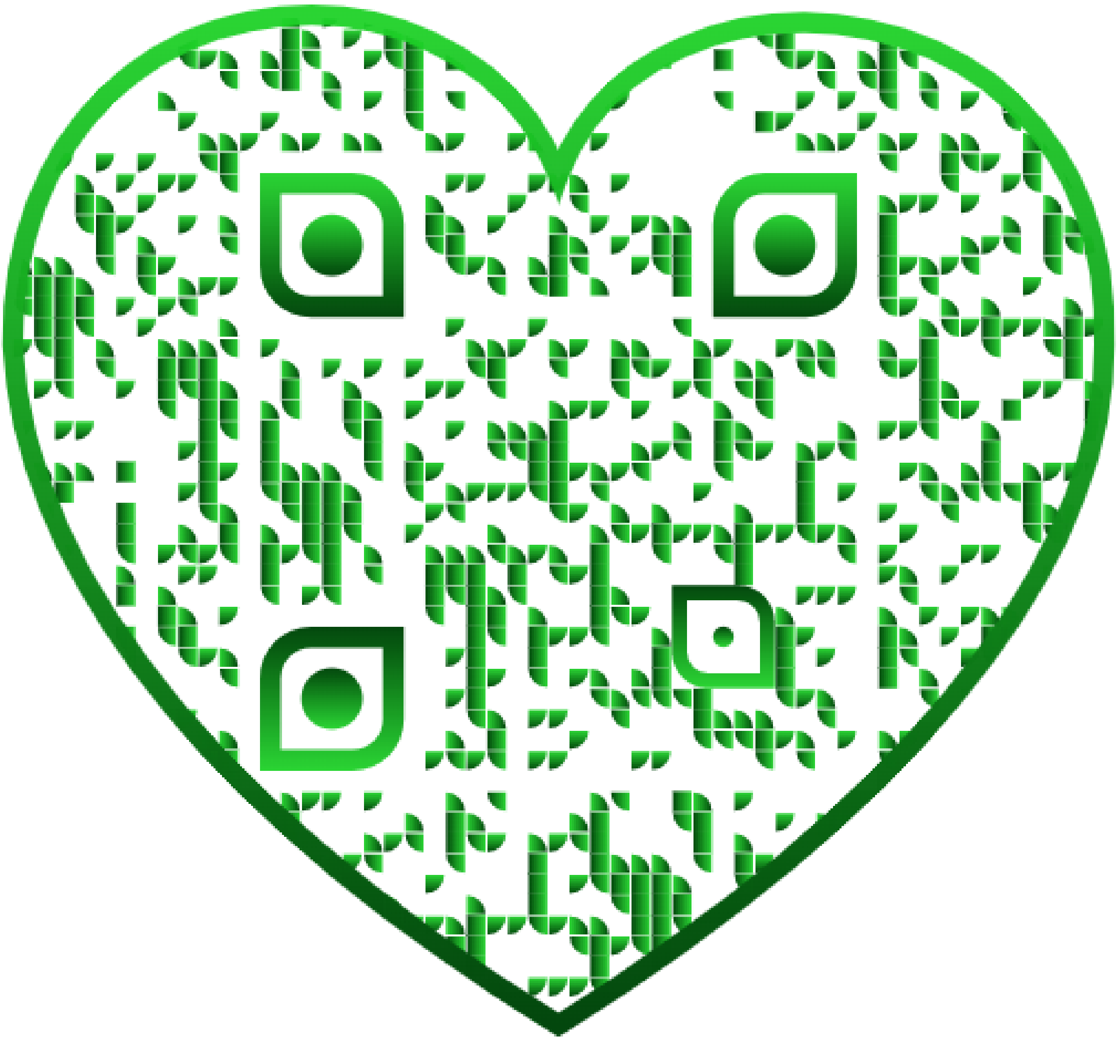

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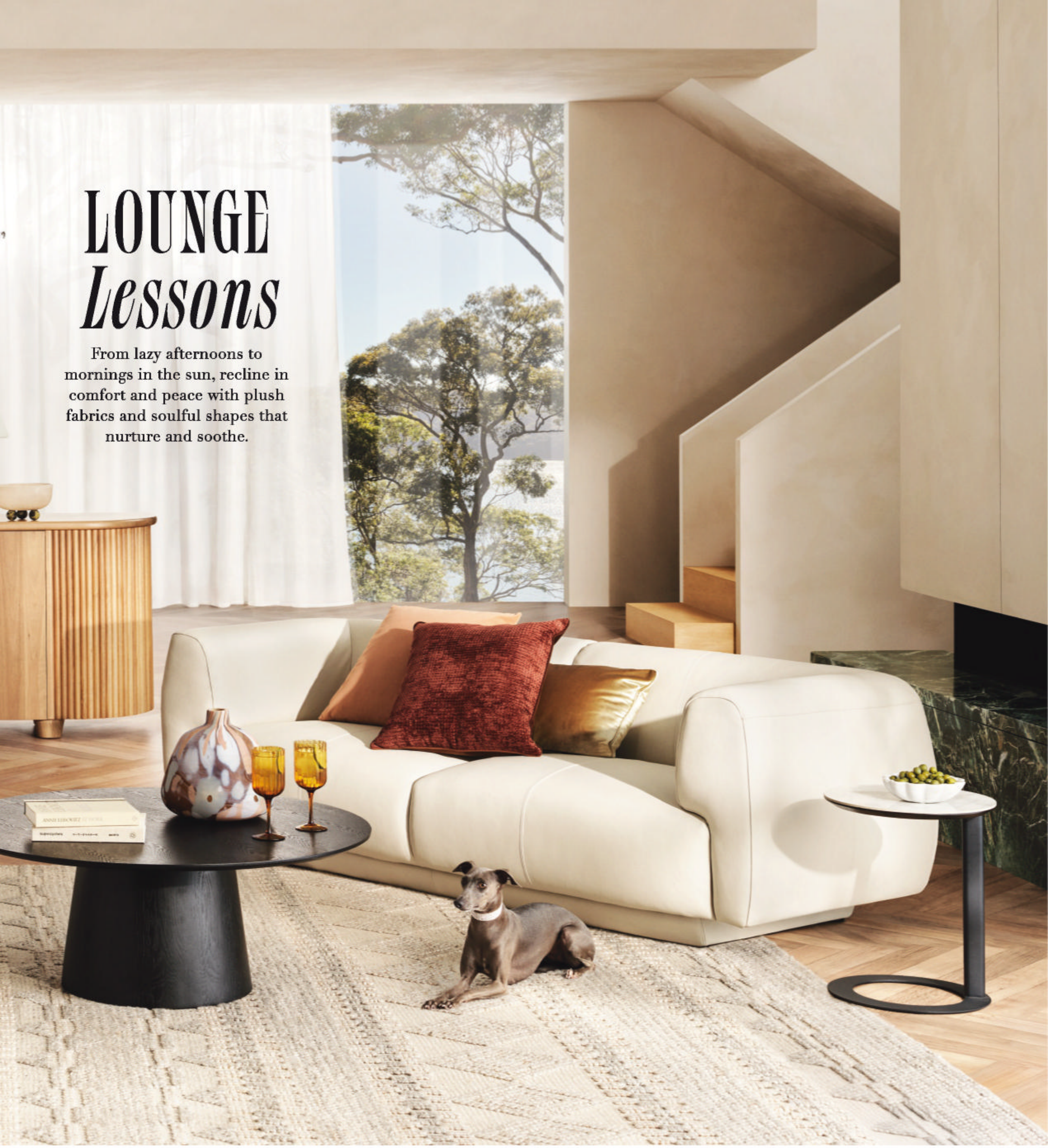

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SPECIAL OFFER
To receive a stylish free Raine & Humble throw in Taupe valued at $159, simply subscribe to Home Beautiful magazine. Plus, the first 100 subscribers get a surprise gift valued up to $100 as a special thank you. This offer ends on 3 August 2025.

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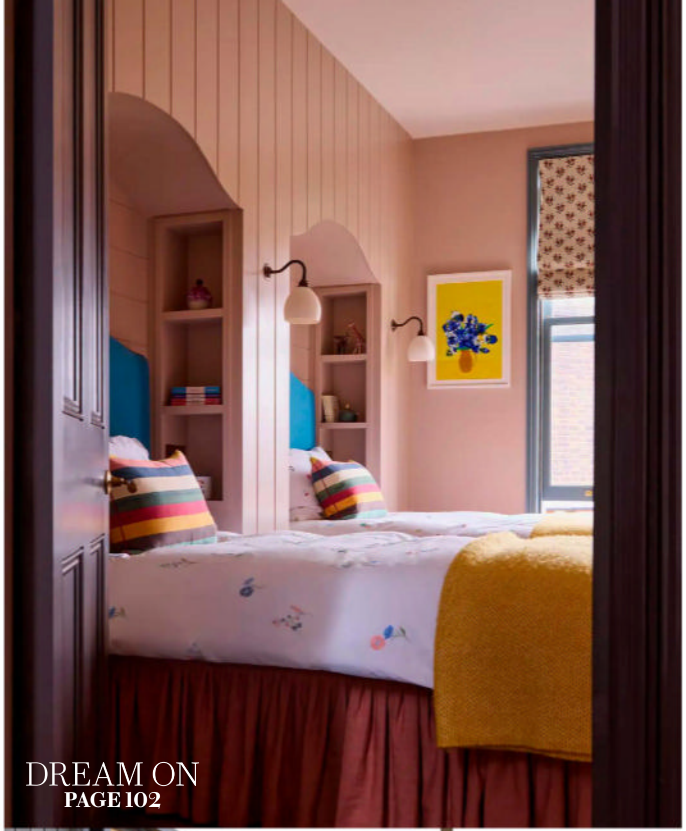

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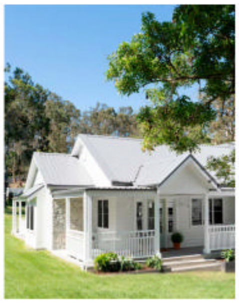
CLICK THROUGH

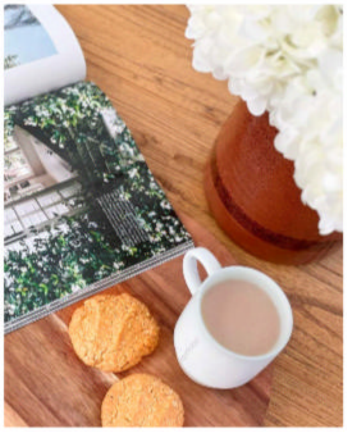
THE STORIES YOU'VE LOVED ON WWW.HOMEBEAUTIFUL.COM.AU

Shelley Craft sells her Byron Bay family home



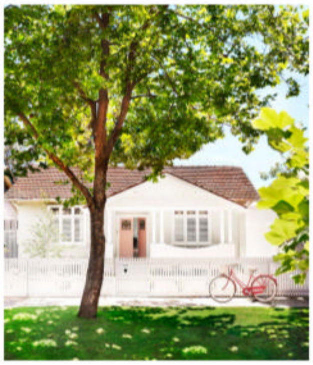
How to quickly and easily make over your facade

Edwina Bartholomew kicks off her hotel restoration



ME AND *HB*

There's nothing we love more than inspiring readers to transform their homes. Reader Bec is building a modern farmhouse on the NSW South Coast and sharing the journey on social media (@hilltophouse.southcoast2.0). She took some time out from creating her dream home to enjoy the July issue of Home Beautiful. We pair beautifully with a cup of tea and some homemade biccies!



COVER LOOK

FIRST IMPRESSIONS MATTER AND THIS CLASSIC CALIFORNIA BUNGALOW MAKES A SERIOUS STYLE STATEMENT. HEARTLY DESIGN STUDIO COATED THE FACADE AND FENCE IN COLORBOND SURFMIST, WITH A POP OF PINK IN DULUX PIGLET FOR THE FRONT DOOR. PHOTOGRAPHY: *Martina Gemmola*

PHOTOGRAPHY (TOP LEFT) **SIMON WHITBREAD** (BOTTOM LEFT) **JESSIE PRINCE & DOMAIN** (BOTTOM MIDDLE) **LOUISE ROCHE** (BOTTOM RIGHT) **KIRSTEN CUNNINGHAM VIA @SALTASH_FARM INSTAGRAM** INTERIOR DESIGN (TOP LEFT) **SMITH + LEVINE** STYLING (BOTTOM MIDDLE) **KYLIE JACKES** FABRIC (IN BACKGROUND) **'SMOKE BUSH' IN MULLED WINE, QUERCUS & CO.**

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ELLE'S TEXTILE OF THE MONTH
Mokum's 'Fleur' fabric in Blush is such an elegant botanical toile. I can see this on upholstery and window treatments. Divine. Find it at The Fabric Editors, $56/m.

PHOTOGRAPHY (PORTRAIT) ALANA LANDSBERRY

EDITOR'S LETTER

Having renovated my own home, it occurred to me that though there is plenty of 'finished product' inspiration out there, there is not a lot of detail about the actual build journey. Budget setting, development applications, finding the right build team, choosing your finishes. There's so much to think about and it can feel quite overwhelming. To clarify the process and help you on the way with your own adventure, we've created a new series called 'Beautiful Builds' where we explore all the decisions that go into planning, designing and constructing a new home. Flip to page 27 for our first feature, which details everything from real estate advice to a build timeline, and one of the greatest mysteries of all – what the house costs. (After all, that is what we all *really* want to know.) We will also have a regular column from the perspective of a builder. What is their best advice? What's a big no-no? How often should we visit the site? We're all ears!

If you are looking for some motivation to get started – or keep going – turn to page 135 to pore over our Before and After special. There are four spectacular homes that span different architectural styles, each one reimagined to suit the families who live there. Sometimes a big renovation isn't on the cards, so a room makeover is in order. From page 45 we show you how to style a living room three different ways: one for families who need flexibility, another conversational set-up for entertainers and a third for compact spaces that call for a big impact.

Whatever stage you're at, it costs nothing to dream, so I hope this issue inspires you, whichever stage of home creation you're at.

Elle Lovelock

ELLE LOVELOCK, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Get in touch with me on Instagram @ellelovelock

Beautiful buys **Here's what I'm coveting and buying this month**

This 'Bernadotte' kettle is possibly the chicest I've ever seen; $269, Georg Jensen.

I daydream about this Numéro Neuf handbag in Sandalwood, $880, Polène.

A true objet d'art! The 'Vela' candle in marble, from $69.95, Freedom.

In love with this Garbo & Friends 'Apple' bedlinen set, $196 for single, Smallable.

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BEAUTIFUL STYLE

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WOVEN WITH HISTORY

Clarke & Clarke refreshes the legacy of William Morris with William Morris Weaves – a refined collection of weaves and embroideries in modern tones like teal, denim and chartreuse. Blending Arts & Crafts heritage with current tastes, it's designed to layer effortlessly. See more at jamesdunloptextiles.com.

THE EDIT
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STYLE NEWS

THE EDIT

The latest decor drops and noteworthy design finds

EDITED BY **ALICE IERACE & REBECCA HOOTON**

Top it off

King elevates its 'Myco' side table, from $850, with two new colourways – deep red Rosso (pictured left with King's new 'Aura' sofa) and green Verde marble. These premium finishes join the existing timber, leather and steel options. See the range at kingliving.com.

NEW GLOW

Mocka makes its illuminating debut into the world of lighting with a considered collection of 14 stylish and affordable lamps. Crafted from materials like travertine and marble, each piece is designed to add contemporary flair to the home. Explore the full range at mocka.com.au.

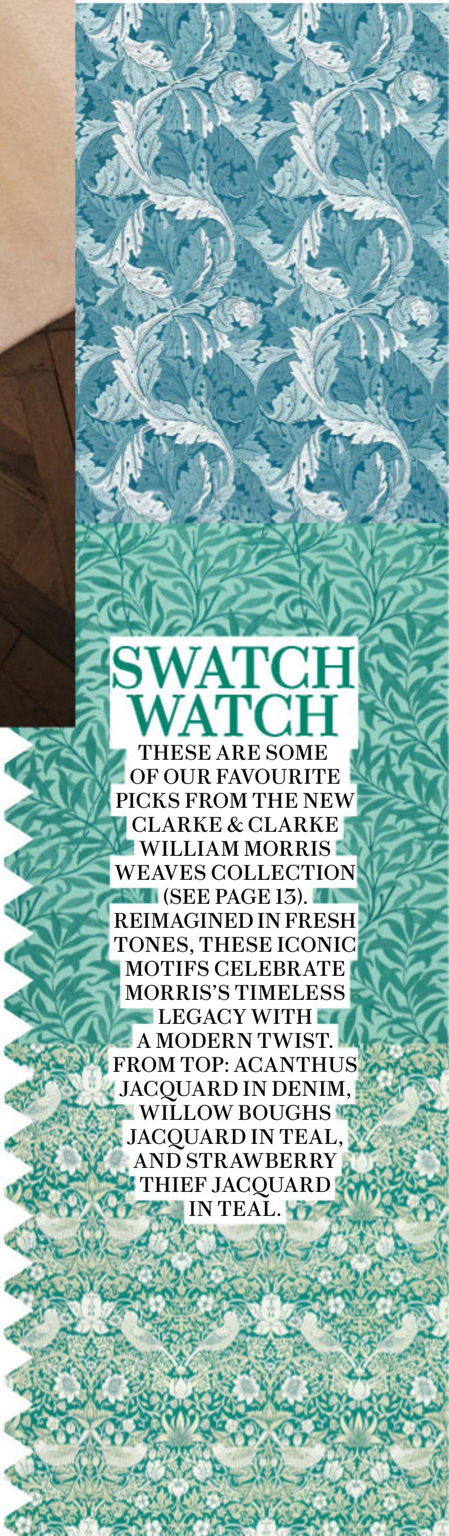
Mocka table lamps, from top: 'Elin', $139.99, 'Travertine', $249.99.

SHOP SPOTLIGHT

Sheet Society

SHEET SOCIETY

Sheet Society lands in NSW with the opening of its first Sydney store in Bondi Junction, joining two much-loved locations in Victoria. Explore the full range, feel every fabric and design your dream bed at the in-store bed bar. Find all location details at sheetsociety.com/en-au.



SWATCH WATCH

THESE ARE SOME OF OUR FAVOURITE PICKS FROM THE NEW CLARKE & CLARKE WILLIAM MORRIS WEAVES COLLECTION (SEE PAGE 13). REIMAGINED IN FRESH TONES, THESE ICONIC MOTIFS CELEBRATE MORRIS'S TIMELESS LEGACY WITH A MODERN TWIST. FROM TOP: ACANTHUS JACQUARD IN DENIM, WILLOW BOUGHS JACQUARD IN TEAL, AND STRAWBERRY THIEF JACQUARD IN TEAL.

DAILY GRIND

Elevate everyday seasoning with the Peugeot 'Paris Chef' salt and pepper mills in Stainless Steel (right), from $199 each. Made in France for exceptional quality, they feature six grind settings and a lifetime guarantee. Available in 18cm, 22cm and 30cm, they make a sophisticated gift. Shop the duo at peugeotmillsaustralia.com.au.

ART LOVERS, NOTE: 'FRENCH IMPRESSIONISM', AN EXHIBITION DEVELOPED BY THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, IS ON DISPLAY FROM 6 JUNE TO 5 OCTOBER, 2025, AT THE NGV ON ST KILDA ROAD IN MELBOURNE. VISIT NGV.VIC.GOV.AU.

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THROW BACK

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PHOTOGRAPHY (SIMONE HAAG X KAVE HOME) BROOK JAMES (SAARDE) BILL CHEN (PEUGEOT) PIXEL AND BECHAMEL

5 minutes with...

SIMONE HAAG

In this thoughtful exchange with interior decorator Simone Haag, she shares how she curates a space, what she prefers to follow over trends and why you can't rush the process.

Your projects range from heritage villas to brutalist builds. What is a constant for you? *"I'm always asking: How will this space make someone feel? Not just how it will look in a photo, but how it will be experienced day-to-day? I like to build slowly, with materials that age well. I'm not led by trends but by pieces that offer a sense of permanence – whether that's an iconic chair, a handcrafted vessel or a vintage rug."*

How are outdoor spaces being reimagined for Australian living today? *"There's a growing appreciation for outdoor areas that feel as intentional as their indoor counterparts. I aim to design spaces that allow for pause – a morning coffee spot that catches the sun, a conversation pit for evening wine or a garden bench framed by an artwork or sculptural moment."*

What approach do you take to creating your own home? *"I'm not in a rush to fill it. I let the right pieces find me and love the idea that a space can grow with you. There's no formula – I'll pair a sculptural light fitting with a simple timber stool or let an artwork dictate the tone of an entire room. Ultimately, I want my home to feel like a place to land."*

Simone Haag's home (pictured) features Kave Home's 'Xoriguer' table, $3199, and 'Futadera' green chairs, $199 each. See kavehome.com.

Creative collection

THREADS OF TIME

Artist and textile designer Barbara O'Donovan crafts decor and photographic pieces that feel like whispers from the past, brought beautifully into the present

STORY REBECCA HOOTON | PHOTOGRAPHY RAQUEL ARANDA

Shed some light *"This is where my ideas come to life," says Barbara, pictured in her studio – a shed on her property. It's filled with treasures and trimmings from her garden. "Sometimes the most interesting shapes and colours reveal themselves in the dying stages of a plant's life." These are arranged and photographed for her artworks, including 'Rhapsody' (opposite, left) and 'Sail Cloth' (opposite, right).* >

AT A GLANCE

Who *Barbara O'Donovan, artist and textile designer.*

What she does *Creates moody botanical collages, captured as photographic artworks, and designs decor with a nostalgic aesthetic and religious motifs.*

Where *From her home studio in Geraldton, Western Australia.*

Why she does it *"I absolutely love what I do and have an innate need to create."*

Visit *barbaraodonovandesign.au, @barbara_odononovan_design*

Sitting quietly in a country church as a child, Barbara O'Donovan would gaze up at the melancholy faces of saints around the walls, illuminated by candlelight, and be captivated. "Those images never really leave you," she reflects. "They still influence my work today."

Barbara is the creative force behind Barbara O'Donovan Design, a brand known for its richly layered decor and artworks that feel as though they've travelled from another time. From her home studio in Geraldton, a remote coastal town in Western Australia, Barbara is energised by the rugged beauty of the local landscape and the many collected treasures that have shaped her life. "The remoteness actually makes me more creative," she explains. "I don't always have access to supplies, so I have to be resourceful – and I thrive on that."

Growing up surrounded by bushland in Emu Creek, Victoria, Barbara's childhood was a heady mix of freedom, adventure and connection to nature. "I remember long summer holidays swimming in the dams with my brothers and sisters," she recalls fondly. "Mum and Dad would pack up the kids, dogs and a big canvas tent and we'd camp by a river. The smell of canvas still takes me back to those carefree days, floating on lilos and swinging on the old 'Tarzan swing' over the water."

After a nomadic early career that saw her working as a cook on boats along the Kimberley coastline, and later in the mining industry in Kalgoorlie, Barbara eventually merged her passion for art, gardening and the worn beauty of vintage finds. "When my husband and I bought an old fibro cottage called St Joans overlooking the sea, I couldn't find cushions or decor that fit the nostalgic aesthetic I loved, so I decided to make my own," she says. That decision led to the creation of her business, where she designs wallpapers, linen cushions, aprons, tea towels and even medical scrub sets, inspired by her late mother's nursing career.

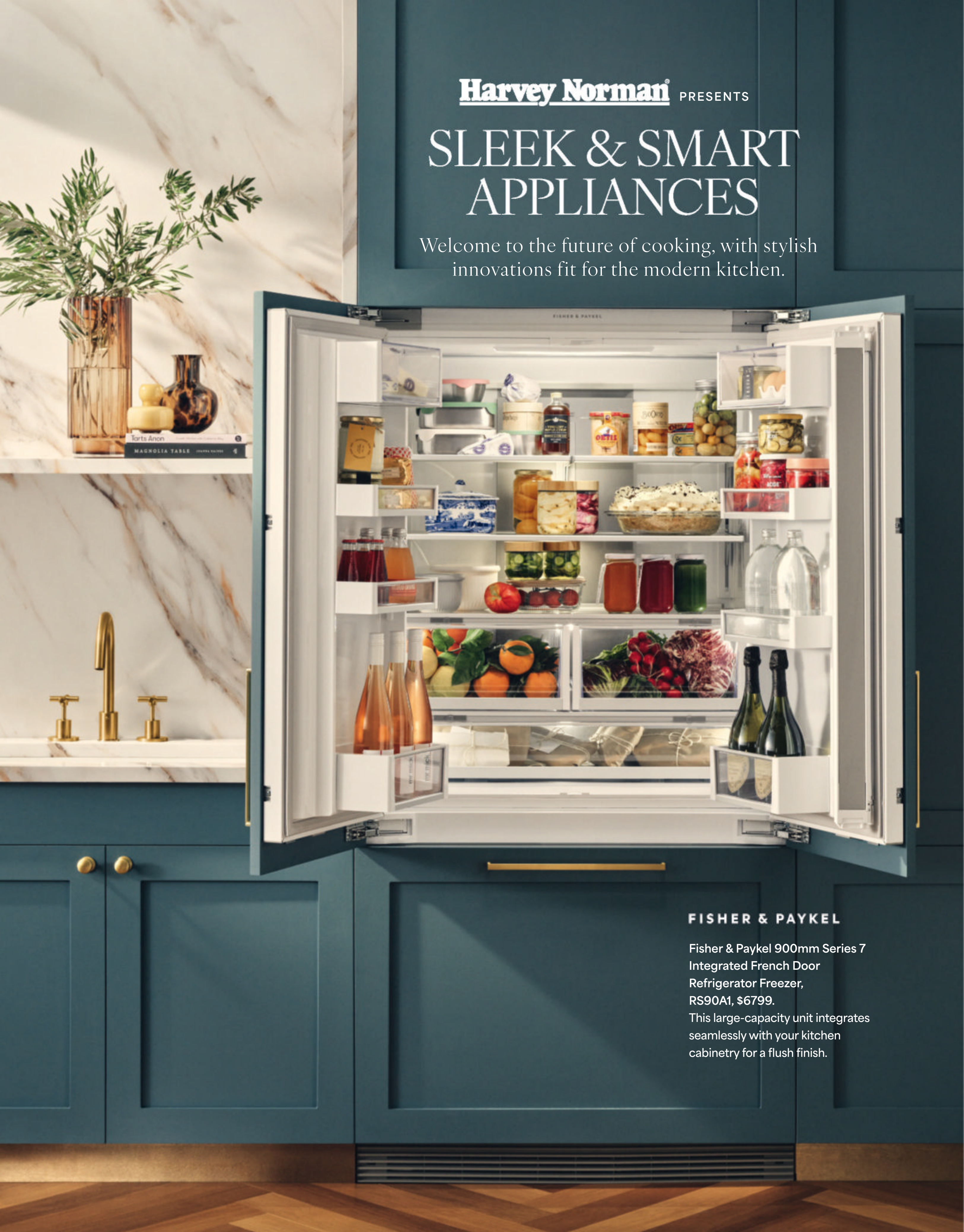
The process is organic, much like Barbara herself. "I always have a lot on the go," she laughs. "I sit in my studio, surrounded by all my 'stuff' – old books, vintage linens, shells, dried botanicals – and just think, sketch and let ideas come together. I don't follow trends; I create what I love."

Music is a constant companion – anything from 1970s classics to pianist Ludovico Einaudi compositions – and her garden is both muse and sanctuary. "There's nothing like sitting quietly with a coffee and letting ideas percolate," she says.

With her husband Frank working FIFO and their children grown, Barbara embraces her quieter life, balancing the rhythm of creative work with morning walks along the foreshore and tending to her Airbnb. Yet every order still feels special. "I'm grateful every single time someone chooses one of my designs," she says. "It's always a pinch-me moment."

For Barbara, it's not about fame or fortune. "I'd have given up years ago if it was," she jokes. "I do this because I love creating, and because I believe in the beauty of things that carry a story."

***Heart strings** The beloved cottage St Joans (this page), home to Barbara and her husband Frank, sits by the sea – a place that buoys the imagination. Here, the creative spends hours in her studio crafting designs with old-world charm, such as the 'Lola' cushion (inset).* HB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PRECISION AT A TOUCH

FISHER & PAYKEL

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Fisher & Paykel 900mm Series 7 5 Zone Induction Cooktop, CI905DTB4, $2799.

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FISHER & PAYKEL

With this dishwasher's two independently operational drawers, you can select different wash programs at the same time and take care of all your after-meal cleaning in one cycle. In addition, flexible racking in both drawers allows you to customise the internal shelving structure to suit your specific needs.

Fisher & Paykel Series 7 Contemporary Double DishDrawer™ Dishwasher – Stainless Steel, DD60D2NX9, $1999.

Bespoke programming

Choose from six different wash programs including Heavy, Medium, Light and Rinse. You can also personalise these programs with additional options, including Quick for when you need a faster cycle, Sanitise for extra protection from bacteria and Dry+ for loads that take longer to dry, such as plastic dishes.

Seamlessly flush installation

Specially designed to be installed under your benchtop, the Double DishDrawer™ Dishwasher comes complete with recessed handles for a more streamlined look, and the additional option of a custom kickstrip, which will ensure minimal gaps.

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Accessories shown are not included. Promotion ends 28/08/2025.

Dual capacity

There's plenty of room in each drawer – they can both accommodate full-sized dinner plates – and you can run them independently, cleaning with one drawer while you load the other.

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BEAUTIFUL BUILDS

NEW CONSTRUCTIONS AND STRUCTURAL RENOVATIONS TO INSPIRE

A STONE'S THROW
PAGE 28

Knockdown rebuild

A STONE'S THROW

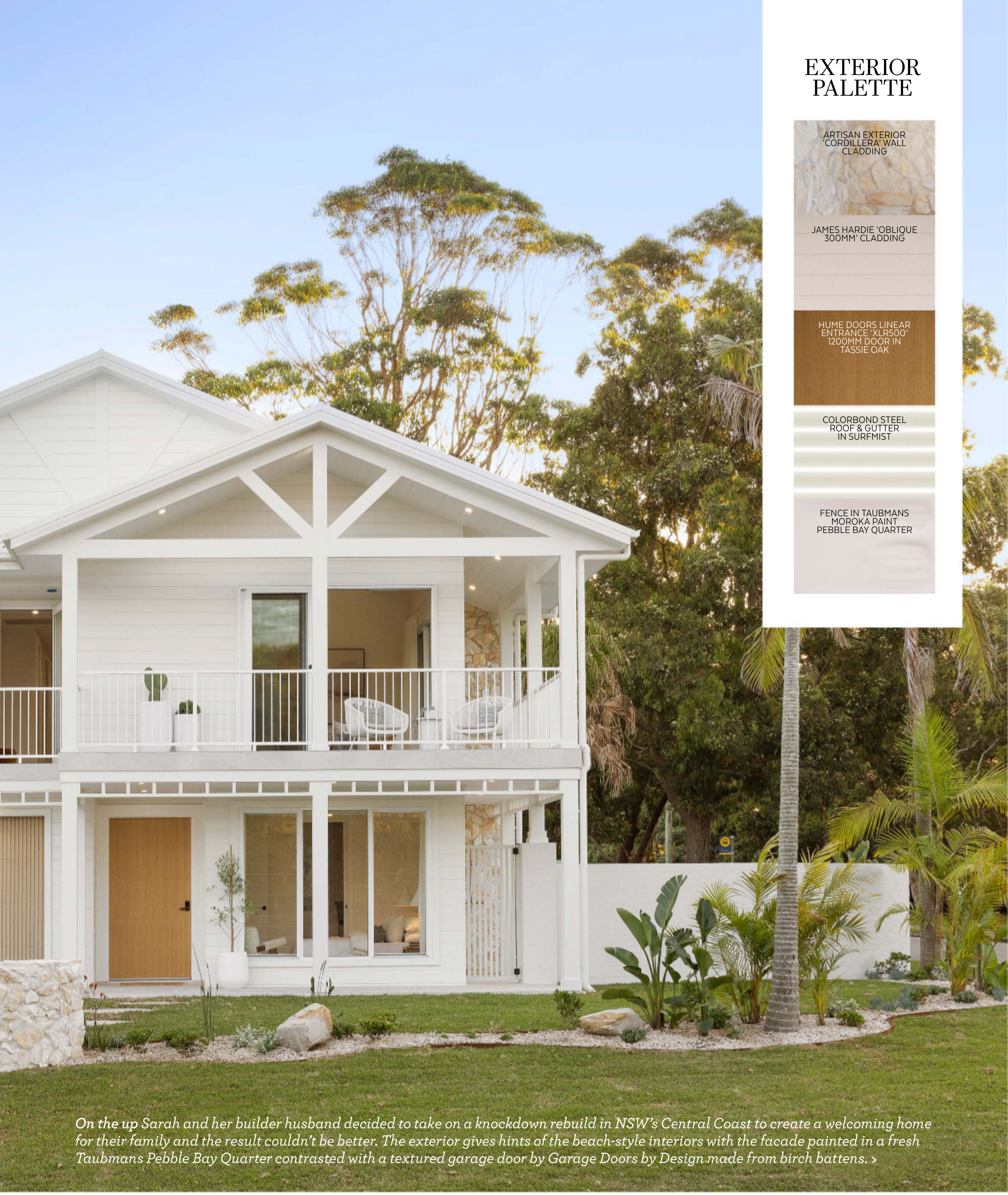
This coastal holiday retreat proves how sometimes a new build can tick more boxes than a renovation

WORDS VICTORIA KINGSBURY | PHOTOGRAPHY LOUISE ROCHE

For their ninth dream home, building and design duo, Sarah and Heather of Oak & Orange landed on the NSW Central Coast. Sarah and her builder husband, also part of the Oak & Orange team, embarked on a knockdown rebuild in beachside suburb Norah Head, to create a stylish coastal family retreat. Here, Sarah shares her building journey, expertise, insights, design inspiration, products and materials.

WHY CHOOSE A NEW BUILD?

The team replaced an outdated three-bedroom red brick house with a modern coastal home. Sarah and her husband chose to build new for complete design control, cost predictability, and a full seven-year builder's warranty. The prime location – just 400 metres from the beach, close to cafes, parks, and only a 1.5 hour drive to Sydney – was a key attraction. "Building new allowed for custom design flexibility, modern finishes, energy efficiency, greater resale appeal and cost predictability," says Sarah. "Renovations can uncover hidden problems that quickly blow the budget. A new build provided much more clarity and control over costs from the outset." The couple wanted to design the home for both family enjoyment and also future resale, featuring luxury touches like rear-yard access and a wine room.



EXTERIOR PALETTE

ARTISAN EXTERIOR 'CORDILLERA' WALL CLADDING

JAMES HARDIE 'OBLIQUE 300MM' CLADDING

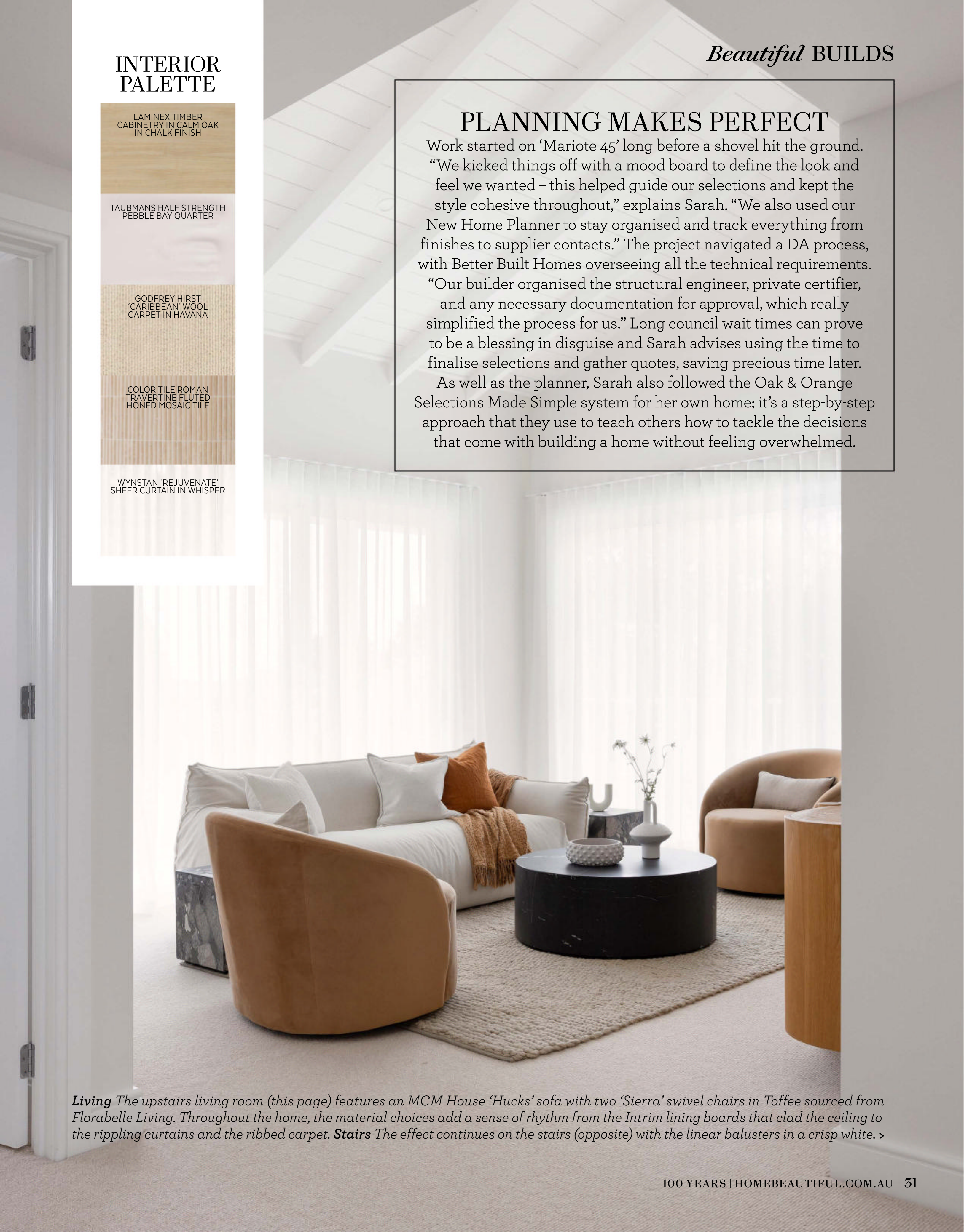
HUME DOORS LINEAR ENTRANCE 'XLR500' 1200MM DOOR IN TASSIE OAK

COLORBOND STEEL ROOF & GUTTER IN SURFMIST

FENCE IN TAUBMANS MOROKA PAINT PEBBLE BAY QUARTER

On the up *Sarah and her builder husband decided to take on a knockdown rebuild in NSW's Central Coast to create a welcoming home for their family and the result couldn't be better. The exterior gives hints of the beach-style interiors with the facade painted in a fresh Taubmans Pebble Bay Quarter contrasted with a textured garage door by Garage Doors by Design made from birch battens. >*

> “CHOOSING THE RIGHT TEAM MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN ENSURING YOUR PROJECT RUNS SMOOTHLY AND DELIVERS A HOME YOU’LL LOVE”
>
> **SARAH**



INTERIOR PALETTE

LAMINEX TIMBER CABINETRY IN CALM OAK IN CHALK FINISH

TAUBMANS HALF STRENGTH PEBBLE BAY QUARTER

GODFREY HIRST 'CARIBBEAN' WOOL CARPET IN HAVANA

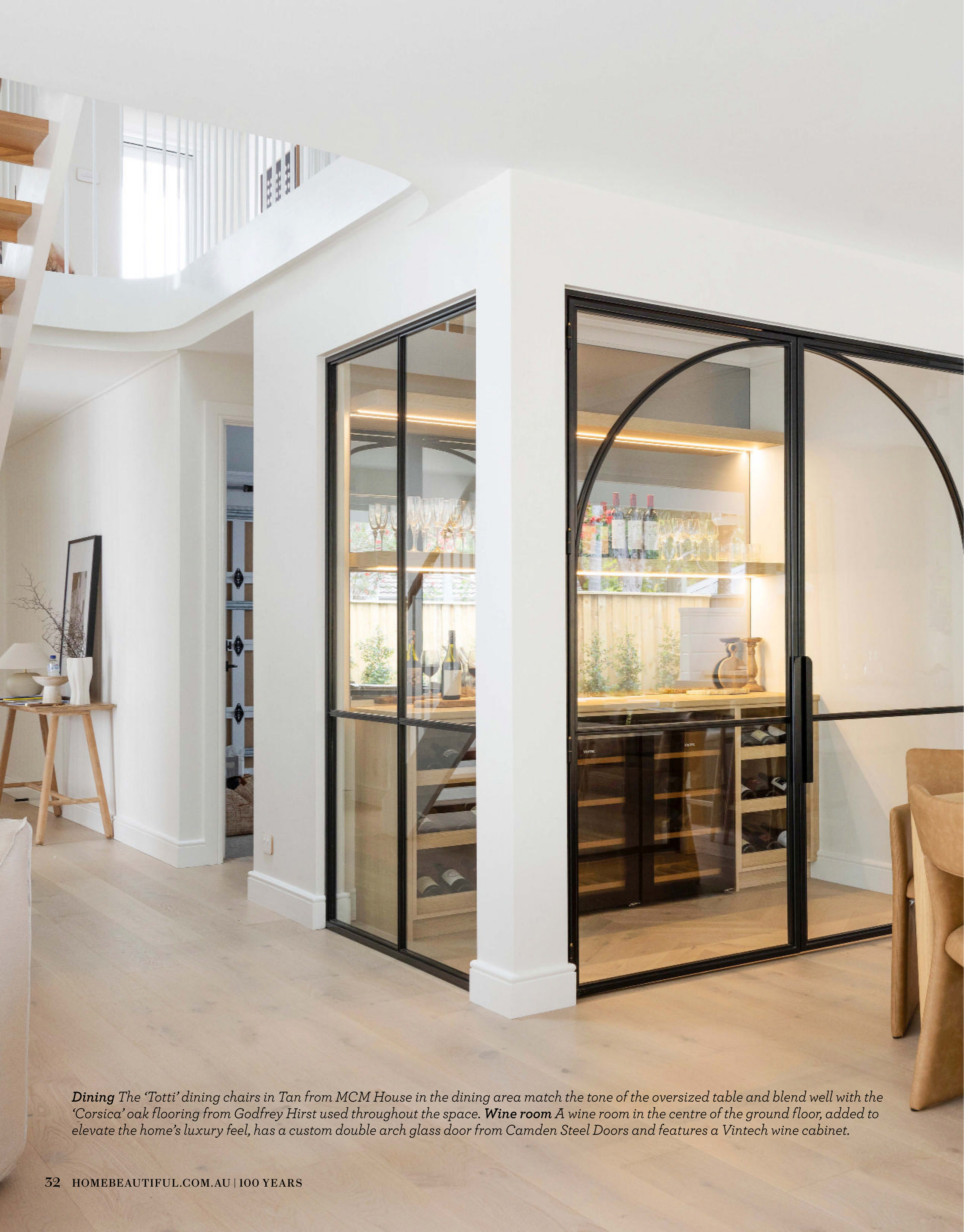
COLOR TILE ROMAN TRAVERTINE FLUTED HONED MOSAIC TILE

WYNSTAN 'REJUVENATE' SHEER CURTAIN IN WHISPER

PLANNING MAKES PERFECT

Work started on 'Mariote 45' long before a shovel hit the ground. "We kicked things off with a mood board to define the look and feel we wanted – this helped guide our selections and kept the style cohesive throughout," explains Sarah. "We also used our New Home Planner to stay organised and track everything from finishes to supplier contacts." The project navigated a DA process, with Better Built Homes overseeing all the technical requirements. "Our builder organised the structural engineer, private certifier, and any necessary documentation for approval, which really simplified the process for us." Long council wait times can prove to be a blessing in disguise and Sarah advises using the time to finalise selections and gather quotes, saving precious time later. As well as the planner, Sarah also followed the Oak & Orange Selections Made Simple system for her own home; it's a step-by-step approach that they use to teach others how to tackle the decisions that come with building a home without feeling overwhelmed.

Living *The upstairs living room (this page) features an MCM House 'Hucks' sofa with two 'Sierra' swivel chairs in Toffee sourced from Florabelle Living. Throughout the home, the material choices add a sense of rhythm from the Intrim lining boards that clad the ceiling to the rippling curtains and the ribbed carpet.* ***Stairs*** *The effect continues on the stairs (opposite) with the linear balusters in a crisp white.* >



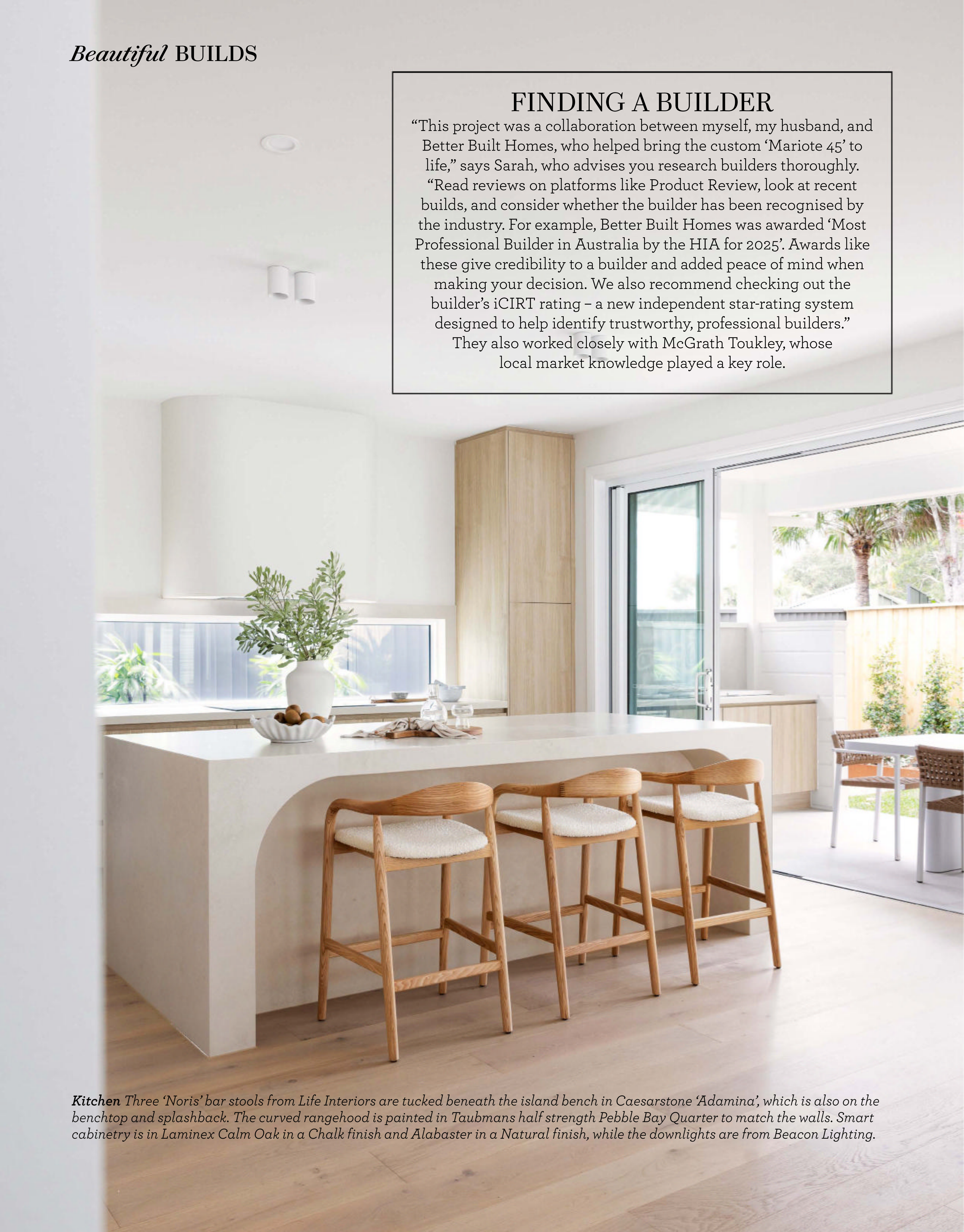
Dining *The 'Totti' dining chairs in Tan from MCM House in the dining area match the tone of the oversized table and blend well with the 'Corsica' oak flooring from Godfrey Hirst used throughout the space.* ***Wine room*** *A wine room in the centre of the ground floor, added to elevate the home's luxury feel, has a custom double arch glass door from Camden Steel Doors and features a Vintech wine cabinet.*

COMING UP WITH THE VISION

For this home, the location inspired the look and feel. "Our vision was to create a modern-luxe coastal retreat that feels both warm and elegant, with just the right amount of wow factor," says Sarah. "We wanted the interiors to feel calm and timeless, so we selected a neutral palette inspired by the surrounding landscape." Warm whites, sandy tones, and layered textures evoke relaxed coastal style. "Every detail was carefully considered, from high-end finishes to the practical layout."

ADDING PROPERTY VALUE

Several features were thoughtfully included to enhance buyer appeal and property value. "Based on expert advice from McGrath Toukley, we added rear yard access – ideal for storing a boat or caravan – resonating with local buyers," says Sarah. "Some of the other luxury highlights include a wine room, a pool, a central open timber staircase that makes for a striking focal point, four ensuite bathrooms, and fully integrated kitchen appliances, balancing luxury with practicality." ›



FINDING A BUILDER

"This project was a collaboration between myself, my husband, and Better Built Homes, who helped bring the custom 'Mariote 45' to life," says Sarah, who advises you research builders thoroughly. "Read reviews on platforms like Product Review, look at recent builds, and consider whether the builder has been recognised by the industry. For example, Better Built Homes was awarded 'Most Professional Builder in Australia by the HIA for 2025'. Awards like these give credibility to a builder and added peace of mind when making your decision. We also recommend checking out the builder's iCIRT rating – a new independent star-rating system designed to help identify trustworthy, professional builders." They also worked closely with McGrath Toukley, whose local market knowledge played a key role.

Kitchen *Three 'Noris' bar stools from Life Interiors are tucked beneath the island bench in Caesarstone 'Adamina', which is also on the benchtop and splashback. The curved rangehood is painted in Taubmans half strength Pebble Bay Quarter to match the walls. Smart cabinetry is in Laminex Calm Oak in a Chalk finish and Alabaster in a Natural finish, while the downlights are from Beacon Lighting.*

> “WHEN BUDGETING, WE ALWAYS RECOMMEND INCLUDING EVERYTHING FROM THE START” **SARAH**

BUDGETING FOR THE BUILD

Sarah’s biggest tip? Price everything at the beginning. “This is especially important if you’re borrowing funds from the bank, as you want to make sure you’ve allowed enough to complete the entire project,” says Sarah. “Too often people forget to include essentials like landscaping or window furnishings, leaving them short when it’s time to finish the home. If you’re building with a project home builder, you’ll need to budget for more than just the base price,” she adds. For the same level of finish as this home, Sarah advises allowing for an extra 30 to 40 per cent for upgrades and finishes. “If you’re working with a custom builder, most upgrades are usually included, but it’s still worth double-checking what’s covered.” For this project, the total cost was $1,600,000. Here’s the budget breakdown:

- ***House construction:* 88%**
- ***Pool:* 6%**
- ***Landscaping:* 4%**
- ***Window coverings:* 2%** >

BUILDING TIMELINE

2022
LAND PURCHASED

JUN-AUG 2023
PLANS DRAWN

AUG 2023
PLANS SUBMITTED TO COUNCIL

SEP 2023
DA APPROVED

DEC 2023
CONSTRUCTION COMMENCED AND SLAB POURED

JAN 2024
FRAMES UP

APR 2024
INTERNAL LININGS INSTALLED

MAY 2024
LOCK-UP STAGE

SEP 2024
HANDOVER

SEP-OCT 2024
POOL & LANDSCAPING

SUSTAINABILITY

There are a number of sustainable design elements used for this home, to help improve energy efficiency, reduce environmental impact, and align with BASIX (Building Sustainability Index) requirements in NSW, including passive solar design, water-efficient fixtures, solar panels, rainwater tanks, energy-efficient glazing, energy-efficient appliances, and light-coloured roof.

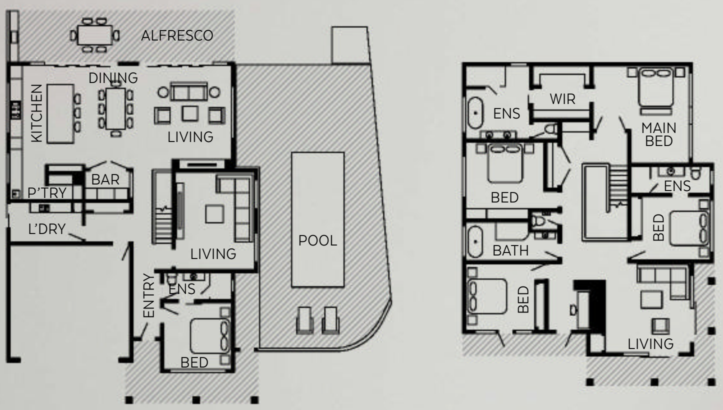
GET THE LOOK

***From left** 'Elysian' commercial pull-out **kitchen mixer** in Brushed Gunmetal, $579.90, ABI Interiors. Tumbled white natural limestone **tiles** (100mm x 100mm), $256/sqm, The Blue Space. 'Grandoak Chevron' **flooring**, $130/sqm, Carpet Court. Alma 'Marko' **door handle** in Brushed Vintage Antique Brass, $109, Buildmat. Victoria + Albert 'Corvara 55' above-counter **basin** in Gloss White, $985, Harvey Norman. Martec 'Hampton' **ceiling fan** with remote, $349.99, Temple & Webster. 'Uno Owan' **sconce**, $365, MCM House.*

FLOOR PLAN

GROUND FLOOR

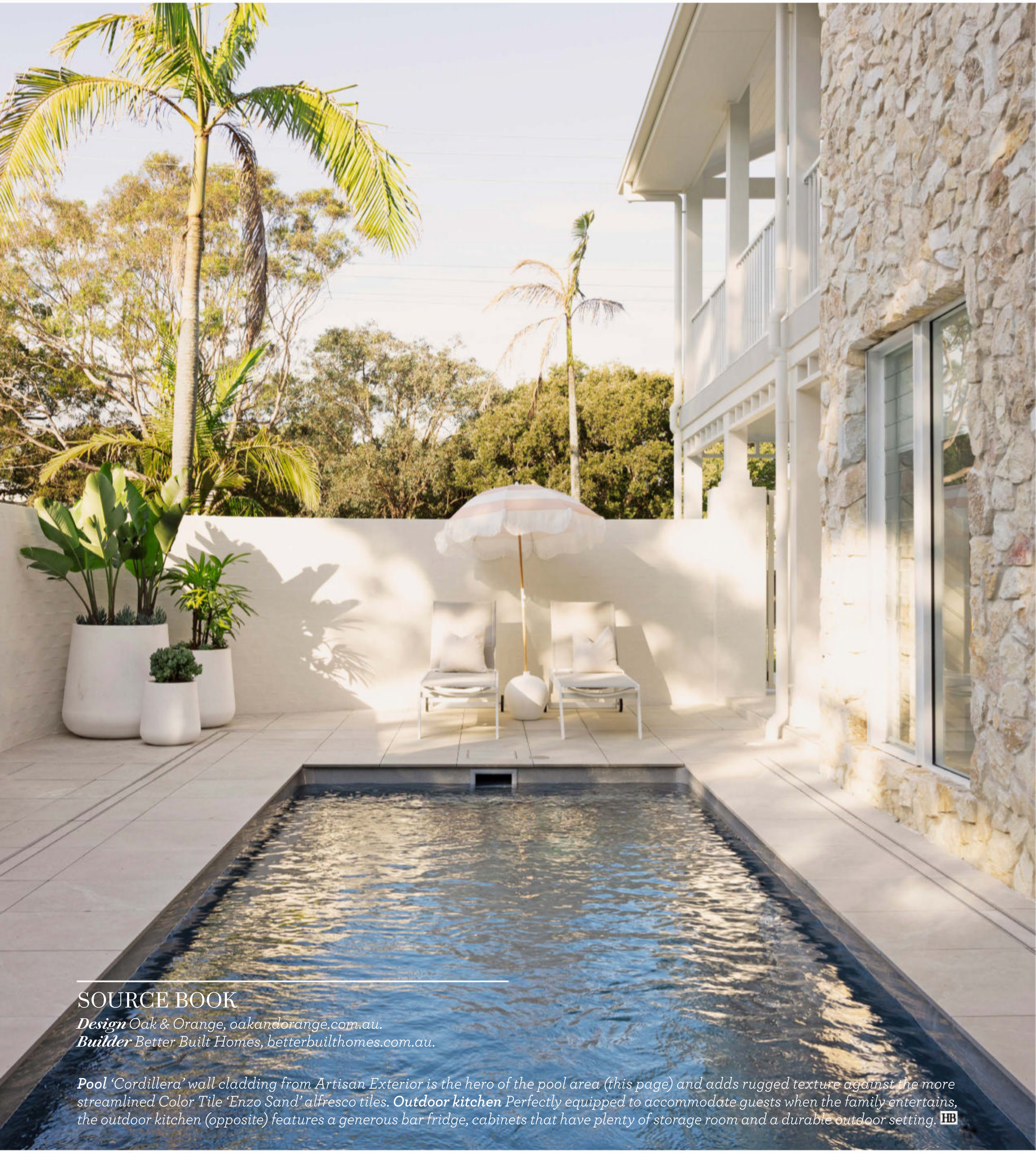
FIRST FLOOR


ALFRESCO
DINING
KITCHEN
LIVING
BAR
P'TRY
L'DRY
LIVING
POOL
ENTRY
ENS
BED
ENS
WIR
MAIN BED
BED
ENS
BED
BATH
BED
LIVING

Main bedroom *This room is soaked in a tonal colour palette of sand, taupe and cream against a wash of white with a touch of dusty pink. 'Yoanna' rug from Miss Amara.* ***Main bathroom*** *A 'Waverley' vanity from ADP Australia (opposite) is topped with Caesarstone 'Adamina'. The 'Lims' ivory wall and floor tiles are from Color Tile, and a Kado 'Lussi' basin from Reece, Antique Brass taps from Yabby, and a 'Studio' mirror from Granite Lane add a luxurious finishing touch. >*

EXTERIOR & LANDSCAPING

Like the interior of the home, the exterior and landscaping also reflects the beach locale, with plenty of texture and sandy hues. “We used James Hardie ‘Oblique’ cladding in Pebble Bay Quarter, ‘Cordillera’ wall cladding, and Color Tile ‘Enzo Sand’ alfresco tiles to create a timeless, textured exterior,” says Sarah. “A heated outdoor pool was designed early on and included from the start of the build. It’s framed by a curved rendered privacy wall, fully tiled surrounds, and sleek strip drains that handle water runoff, while maintaining a clean, minimalist look – essential given the drainage challenges of tiling around a pool.”



SOURCE BOOK

Design *Oak & Orange, oakandorange.com.au.*
Builder *Better Built Homes, betterbuilthomes.com.au.*

Pool *'Cordillera' wall cladding from Artisan Exterior is the hero of the pool area (this page) and adds rugged texture against the more streamlined Color Tile 'Enzo Sand' alfresco tiles.* ***Outdoor kitchen*** *Perfectly equipped to accommodate guests when the family entertains, the outdoor kitchen (opposite) features a generous bar fridge, cabinets that have plenty of storage room and a durable outdoor setting.* HB

The builder's BOOK

Our guest columnist shares the secret to ensuring a smooth start in the early stages of a new build

WORDS **KARA DEMMRICH** | PHOTOGRAPHY **ALLIE ASZODI**

Kara Demmrich (pictured) has completed more than 30 renovations with her husband, Kyal. They've tackled multiple seasons of 'The Block' and hosted their own building series on YouTube. Now Kara is sharing her wealth of knowledge with HB readers in this guest column, where she details her best tips and tricks for each stage of the building process.

Embarking on a new build can be a tad overwhelming. There are endless decisions to be made and expert lingo to learn. It's exciting and daunting all at once – a fact Kyal and I know well. Whether you're gearing up to create your dream home or a stepping stone project, the key to a smooth building process lies in strong planning. But where do you even begin? Take a deep breath and we'll break it down for you.

Feel the need

It's easy to get swept up in glossy inspiration images and floor plans that boast all the bells and whistles. A 'need vs want' list will cut through the noise and help you prioritise. Think of it as a more realistic version of a 'wishlist'. Start by asking, "What do I need to make my home function well, day in and day out?' This might be a set number of bedrooms, a study nook or a kitchen with plentiful bench space.

Dare to dream

Next, allow yourself to dream a little. What would make your home feel truly special to you? Perhaps it's a fireplace in the living room, a freestanding bathtub, a butler's pantry or underfloor heating. These should be listed as 'wants'. You can even number these in order of priority. Alongside your list of needs, this will help you discern what's essential from what's nice to have and will be your reference point throughout the design and building stages. This step really helps when it comes time to making budget-conscious decisions (and trust me, they will come).

Know your limits

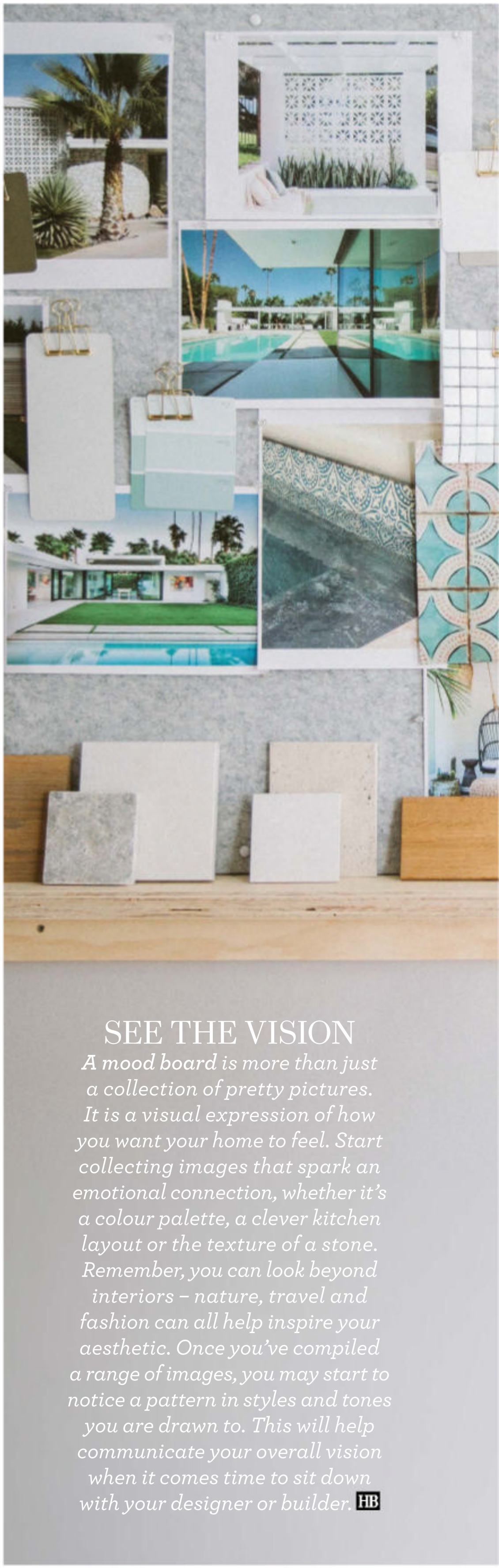
Your budget will shape every decision you make, so it's worth taking the time to get it right. Rather than jumping straight into quotes, take a step back and consider your overall spend. Ask yourself, 'What am I comfortable investing in this project?' Remember to factor in extras for your approvals, driveway, fencing and landscaping. Always set aside a 10 to 15 per cent contingency as a buffer for unexpected costs. Building a new home is a big undertaking, but with a well-considered budget, you'll be much more in control.

Have the talk

You don't need everything figured out before consulting a professional. In fact, the earlier you do, the better. Whether it's an architect, building designer, interior designer or builder, getting the right people involved from the beginning ensures your ideas are realistic, achievable, and tailored to your lifestyle. A good professional will look beyond want you want and explore how you'd like to live within the home. They'll consider things like orientation, light, airflow and how the home will evolve as your needs change. They can also assist in navigating council requirements and approvals, which can otherwise feel like a maze.

Test the waters

If you're unsure where to start, a one-off consultation is a great low-commitment option. It gives you the chance to ask questions and get a feel for whether a professional is the right fit for you and your project. After all, you're not just building a house – you're also building a relationship that will make or break the success of your home. While new builds can be daunting, starting the process with strong foundations will set you up for a smoother, more rewarding journey.



SEE THE VISION

A mood board *is more than just a collection of pretty pictures. It is a visual expression of how you want your home to feel. Start collecting images that spark an emotional connection, whether it's a colour palette, a clever kitchen layout or the texture of a stone. Remember, you can look beyond interiors – nature, travel and fashion can all help inspire your aesthetic. Once you've compiled a range of images, you may start to notice a pattern in styles and tones you are drawn to. This will help communicate your overall vision when it comes time to sit down with your designer or builder.* HB

PHOTOGRAPHY (PORTRAIT) **GRACE PICOT** STYLING (THIS PAGE) **KARA DEMMRICH**

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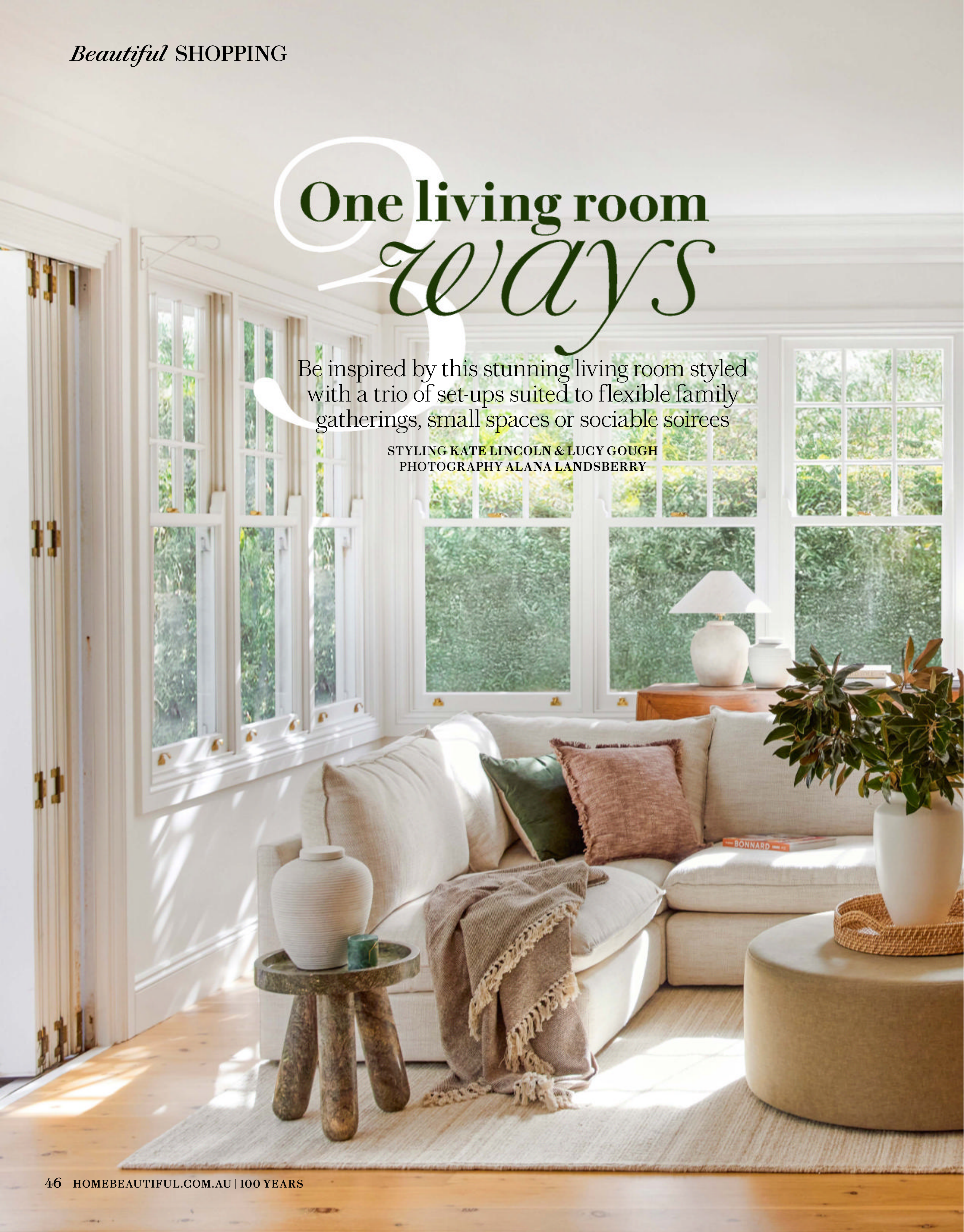
ONE LIVING ROOM THREE WAYS
PAGE 46 →

PHOTOGRAPHY ALANA LANDSBERRY



One living room 3 ways

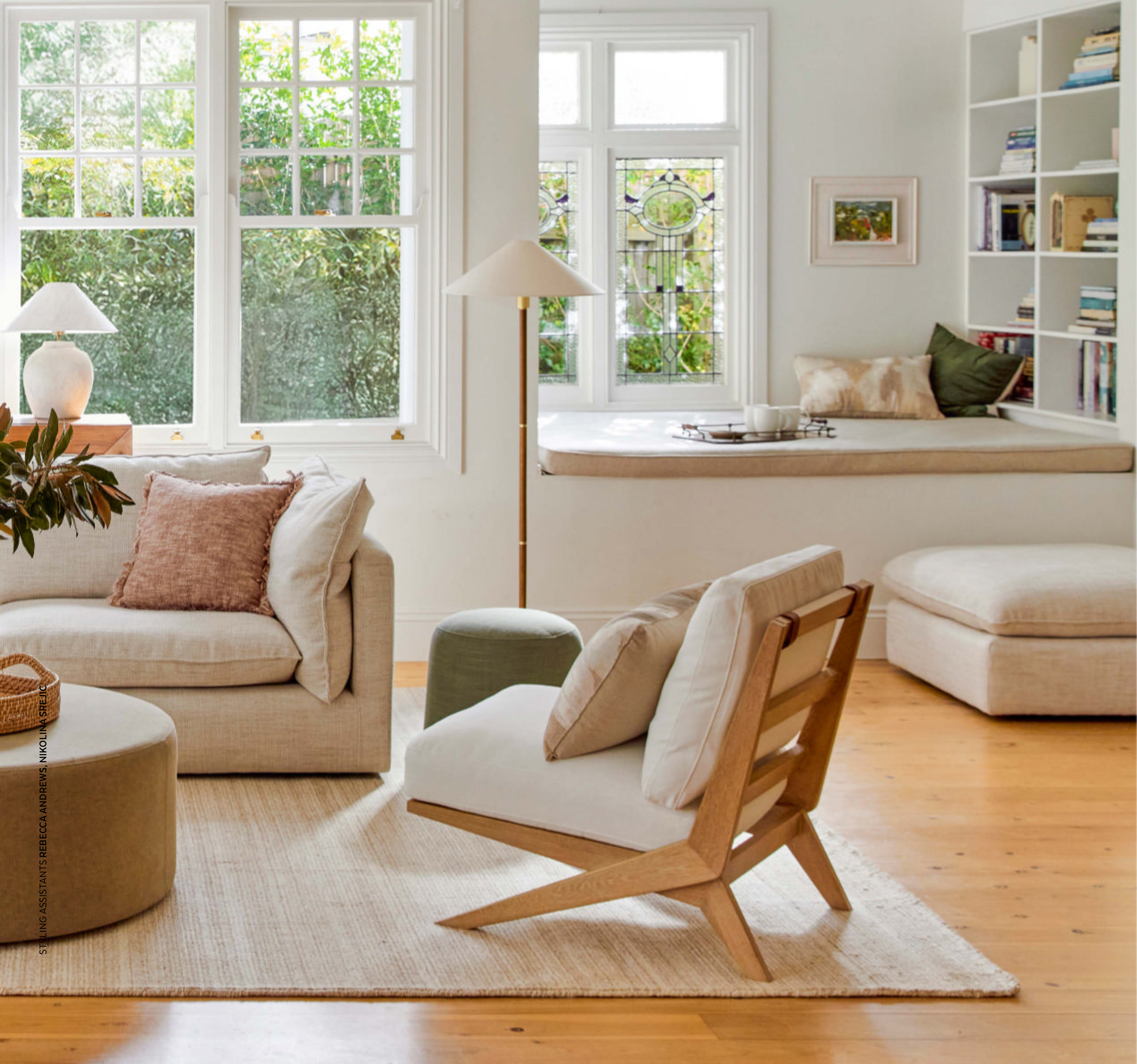
Be inspired by this stunning living room styled with a trio of set-ups suited to flexible family gatherings, small spaces or sociable soirees

STYLING KATE LINCOLN & LUCY GOUGH
PHOTOGRAPHY ALANA LANDSBERRY

THE FAMILY FORMAT

A MODULAR DESIGN *you can* REARRANGE

From left *'Column' marble* **side table,** *$599, and 'Sabi'* **vessel,** *$99.95/30cm, both Freedom. Carrière Frères Winter Forest* **candle,** *$99/185g, Libertine Parfumerie. 'Sorrento' 4-seater* **modular sofa** *with* **ottoman** *(pictured, far right) in Alpha Natural, $4399, Freedom.* **On sofa** *'Lellouche'* **throw** *in Chocolate, $59.95; 'Lexi' velvet* **cushion** *in Green, $59.95/50cm x 50cm (also on window seat); 'York' fringed* **cushions** *in Wood Rose, $59.95 each/50cm x 50cm, all Freedom. 'Wyatt'* **buffet,** *$1999, Freedom.* **On buffet** *'Kallista'* **table lamps,** *$329 each, and 'Sabi'* **vessel,** *$59.95/20cm, both Freedom. 'Harrowe'* **ottoman** *in Chilton Steel, $1199/large, Freedom.* **On ottoman** *'Onito'* **tray** *in Natural, $84.95/50cm, 'Isa'* **vessel** *(used as vase), $99.95/38cm, both Freedom. 'Pod' small* **ottoman** *in Green, $189; 'Derby'* **floor lamp,** *$329; 'Palm Springs'* **occasional chair** *in Canvas Optic White, $999; 'Casselden'* **cushion,** *$79.95/60cm x 40cm (also on window seat); 'Kylie'* **rug,** *from $499/230cm x 160cm, all Freedom.* **On window seat** *Freedom* **cushions,** *as before. Timber* **tray,** *$340, Dusty Luxe. For similar* **mugs,** *try Mikasa 'Chalk Porcelain' mugs, $54.95/set of 4, Victoria's Basement. 'Mid-Century Abstract in Green'* **artwork,** *$450/37.5cm x 35cm (framed), Vintage Art Emporium.* **Books,** *stylist's own.* **>**



STYLING ASSISTANTS REBECCA ANDREWS, NIKOLINA SREJIC

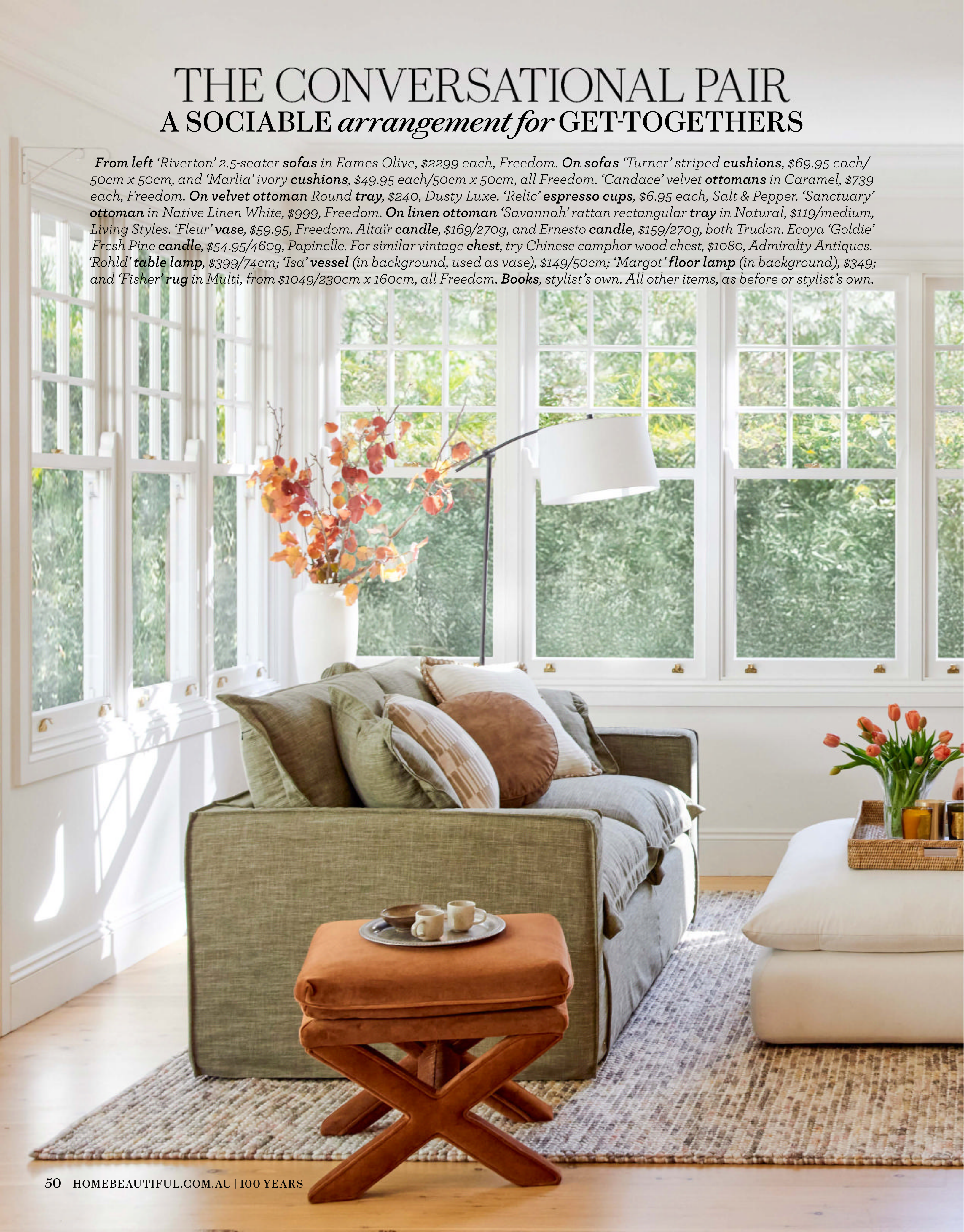
THE COMPACT SET-UP

Make a BIG IMPACT *in a small* SPACE

***This page, from left** ‘Zepplyn’ 3-seater **sofa** in Cotton Velvet Olive, $3199; ‘Bronya’ reversible **cushion,** $59.95/50cm x 50cm; ‘Braylon’ round **cushion,** $39.95/43cm; ‘Zepplyn’ **ottoman** in Cotton Velvet Olive, $1099; marble **checkerboard set,** $149.95; all Freedom. **Opposite, from left** ‘Verde’ marble **side table,** $299, ‘Isla’ **table lamp,** $249, both Freedom. For similar **tumbler,** try ‘Ripple’ stemless glass, $14/set of 6, Target. **On sofa** ‘Lexi’ velvet **cushion** in Green, $39.95/55cm x 35cm, ‘Osmand’ jacquard **cushion,** $59.95/50cm x 50cm, both Freedom. ‘Krid’ **bar cabinet,** $1599, Freedom. For similar **vessel,** try ‘Coral’ vase in Ivory, $392/medium, The Palmier. For similar **vase,** try Heritage ‘Alcot’ glass vase, $79.95/large, Myer. ‘Toscana’ **rug,** from $699/230cm x 160cm, Freedom. All other items, as before.* **>**

THE CONVERSATIONAL PAIR

A SOCIABLE *arrangement for* GET-TOGETHERS



From left *'Riverton' 2.5-seater* ***sofas*** *in Eames Olive, $2299 each, Freedom.* ***On sofas*** *'Turner' striped* ***cushions,*** *$69.95 each/ 50cm x 50cm, and 'Marlia' ivory* ***cushions,*** *$49.95 each/50cm x 50cm, all Freedom. 'Candace' velvet* ***ottomans*** *in Caramel, $739 each, Freedom.* ***On velvet ottoman*** *Round* ***tray,*** *$240, Dusty Luxe. 'Relic'* ***espresso cups,*** *$6.95 each, Salt & Pepper. 'Sanctuary'* ***ottoman*** *in Native Linen White, $999, Freedom.* ***On linen ottoman*** *'Savannah' rattan rectangular* ***tray*** *in Natural, $119/medium, Living Styles. 'Fleur'* ***vase,*** *$59.95, Freedom. Altaïr* ***candle,*** *$169/270g, and Ernesto* ***candle,*** *$159/270g, both Trudon. Ecoya 'Goldie' Fresh Pine* ***candle,*** *$54.95/460g, Papinelle. For similar vintage* ***chest,*** *try Chinese camphor wood chest, $1080, Admiralty Antiques. 'Rohld'* ***table lamp,*** *$399/74cm; 'Isa'* ***vessel*** *(in background, used as vase), $149/50cm; 'Margot'* ***floor lamp*** *(in background), $349; and 'Fisher'* ***rug*** *in Multi, from $1049/230cm x 160cm, all Freedom.* ***Books,*** *stylist's own. All other items, as before or stylist's own.*

10 WAYS TO STYLE YOUR SOFA

1. Modify a modular sofa *by positioning the ottoman to create a second chaise so you can put your feet up.*

2. Use an ottoman as your *coffee table. Place a tray on top to form a stable surface for drinks and objects.*

3. Don't feel you need to *match your entire sofa set – choose a different fabric to upholster your ottoman and add a contrasting armchair.*

4. Always mix fabrics for *visual interest, whether it's mingling different textures in similar tones, or a variety of patterns and colours.*

5. When mixing colours, *limit your palette to three key hues. A ratio of 60:30:10 creates a good balance.*

6. Pattern on pattern *adds depth to your scheme. Mix large- and small-scale prints, plus solids, for cushions, throws and upholstery.*

7. Cushions with feather *or faux-feather fill create a professional-looking finish. Choose an insert one size larger than your cushion cover for a plump look.*

8. Use a combination *of cushion shapes and sizes. Place a 60cm x 40cm lumbar in front of your 60cm x 60cm cushions, or soften the angles with a circular cushion.*

9. Display a tactile throw *over the arm of your sofa to ensure its expanse doesn't add visual bulk to the room.*

10. Use an area rug to *zone your living space. It should be big enough for your sofas to comfortably fit on it.* HB

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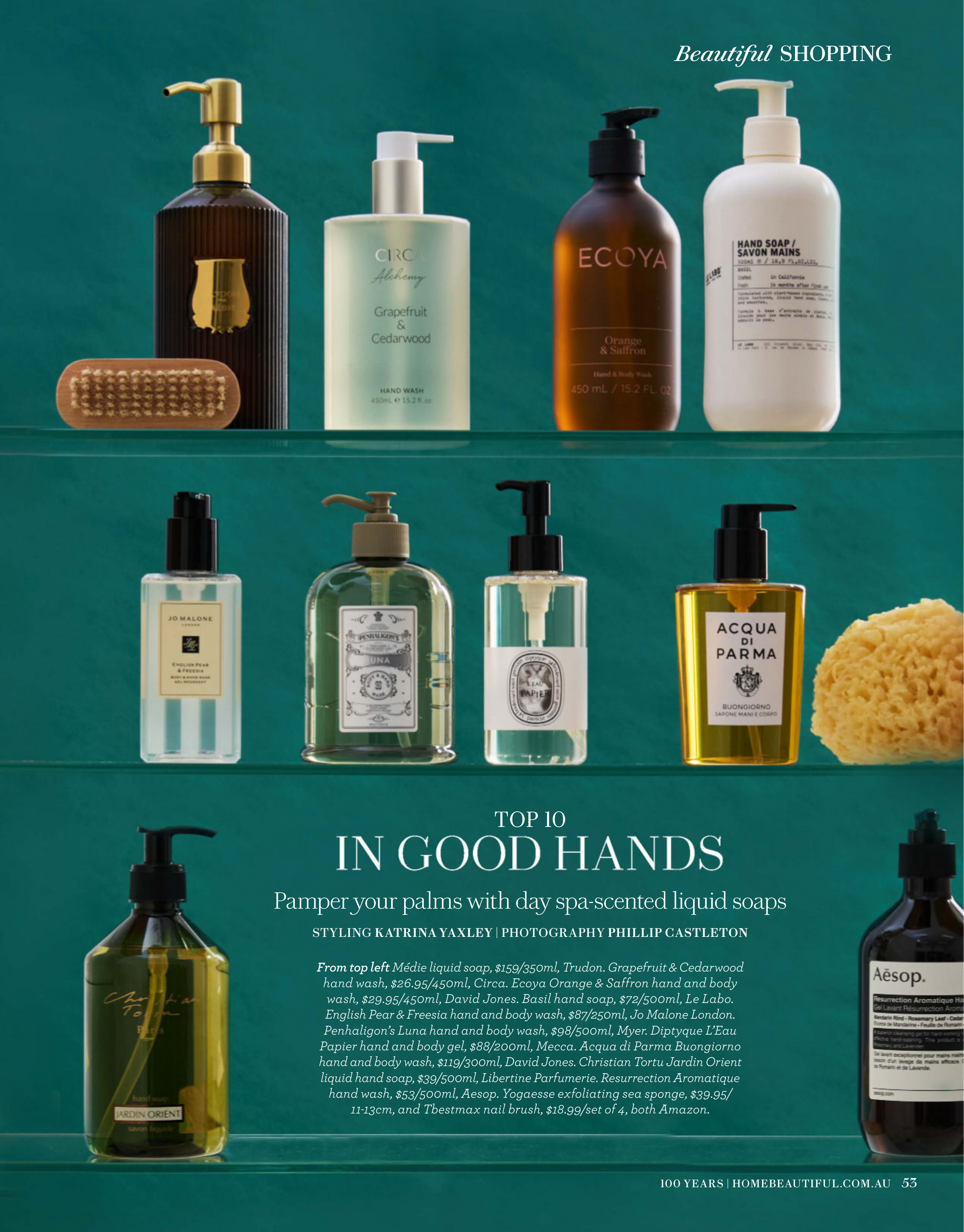
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Alchemy
Grapefruit & Cedarwood
HAND WASH
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ECOYA
Orange & Saffron
Hand & Body Wash
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HAND SOAP / SAVON MAINS
JO MALONE LONDON
ENGLISH PEAR & FREESIA
PENHALIGON'S
LUNA
L'EAU PAPIER
diptyque
ACQUA DI PARMA
BUONGIORNO
SAPONE MANI E CORPO
hand soap
JARDIN ORIENT
savon liquide
Aēsop.
Resurrection Aromatique

TOP 10

IN GOOD HANDS

Pamper your palms with day spa-scented liquid soaps

STYLING KATRINA YAXLEY | **PHOTOGRAPHY PHILLIP CASTLETON**

From top left *Médie liquid soap, $159/350ml, Trudon. Grapefruit & Cedarwood hand wash, $26.95/450ml, Circa. Ecoya Orange & Saffron hand and body wash, $29.95/450ml, David Jones. Basil hand soap, $72/500ml, Le Labo. English Pear & Freesia hand and body wash, $87/250ml, Jo Malone London. Penhaligon's Luna hand and body wash, $98/500ml, Myer. Diptyque L'Eau Papier hand and body gel, $88/200ml, Mecca. Acqua di Parma Buongiorno hand and body wash, $119/300ml, David Jones. Christian Tortu Jardin Orient liquid hand soap, $39/500ml, Libertine Parfumerie. Resurrection Aromatique hand wash, $53/500ml, Aesop. Yogaesse exfoliating sea sponge, $39.95/ 11-13cm, and Tbestmax nail brush, $18.99/set of 4, both Amazon.*

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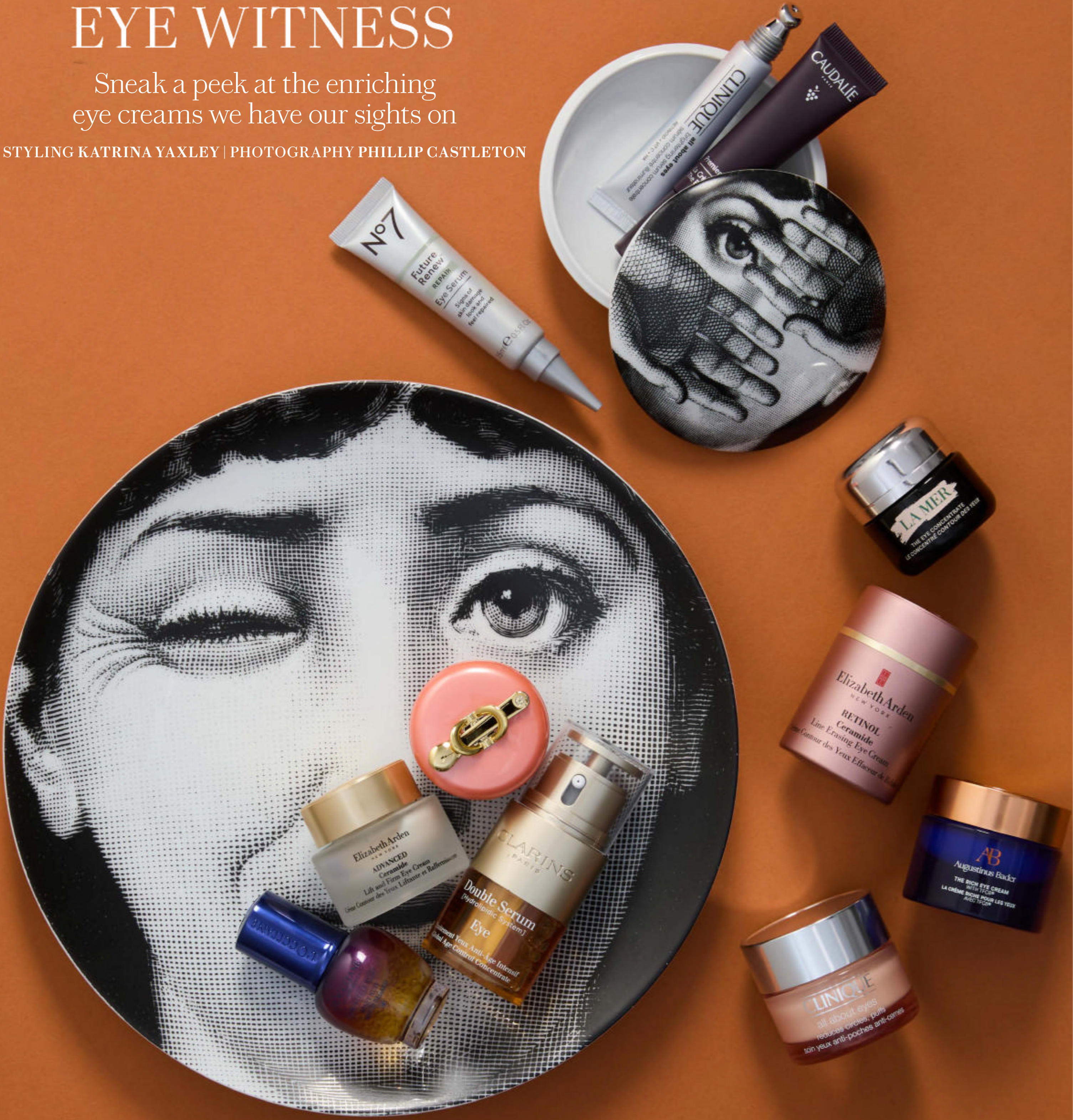
BEAUTY

EYE WITNESS

Sneak a peek at the enriching eye creams we have our sights on

STYLING **KATRINA YAXLEY** | PHOTOGRAPHY **PHILLIP CASTLETON**



__Clockwise from top left__ No 7 Future Renew Repair Eye Serum, $44.99/15ml, Priceline. All About Eyes Brightening Serum Concentrate, $85/10ml, Clinique. Caudalie Premier Cru The Eye Cream, $106/15ml, Sephora. The Eye Concentrate, $440/15ml, La Mer. Elizabeth Arden Retinol Ceramide Line Erasing Eye Cream, $122/15ml, Myer. The Rich Eye Cream, $327/15ml, Augustinus Bader. All About Eyes Eye Cream, $115/30ml, Clinique. Double Eye Serum, $135/20ml, Clarins. Immortelle Reset Overnight Eye Serum, $99/15ml, L'Occitane. Elizabeth Arden Advanced Ceramide Lift and Firm Eye Cream, $125/15ml, Myer. Tatcha The Brightening Eye Cream, $112/15ml, Mecca. Fornasetti 'Tema e Variazioni n.154' round box, $329, and 'Tema e Variazioni n.130' wall plate, $315, both David Jones.

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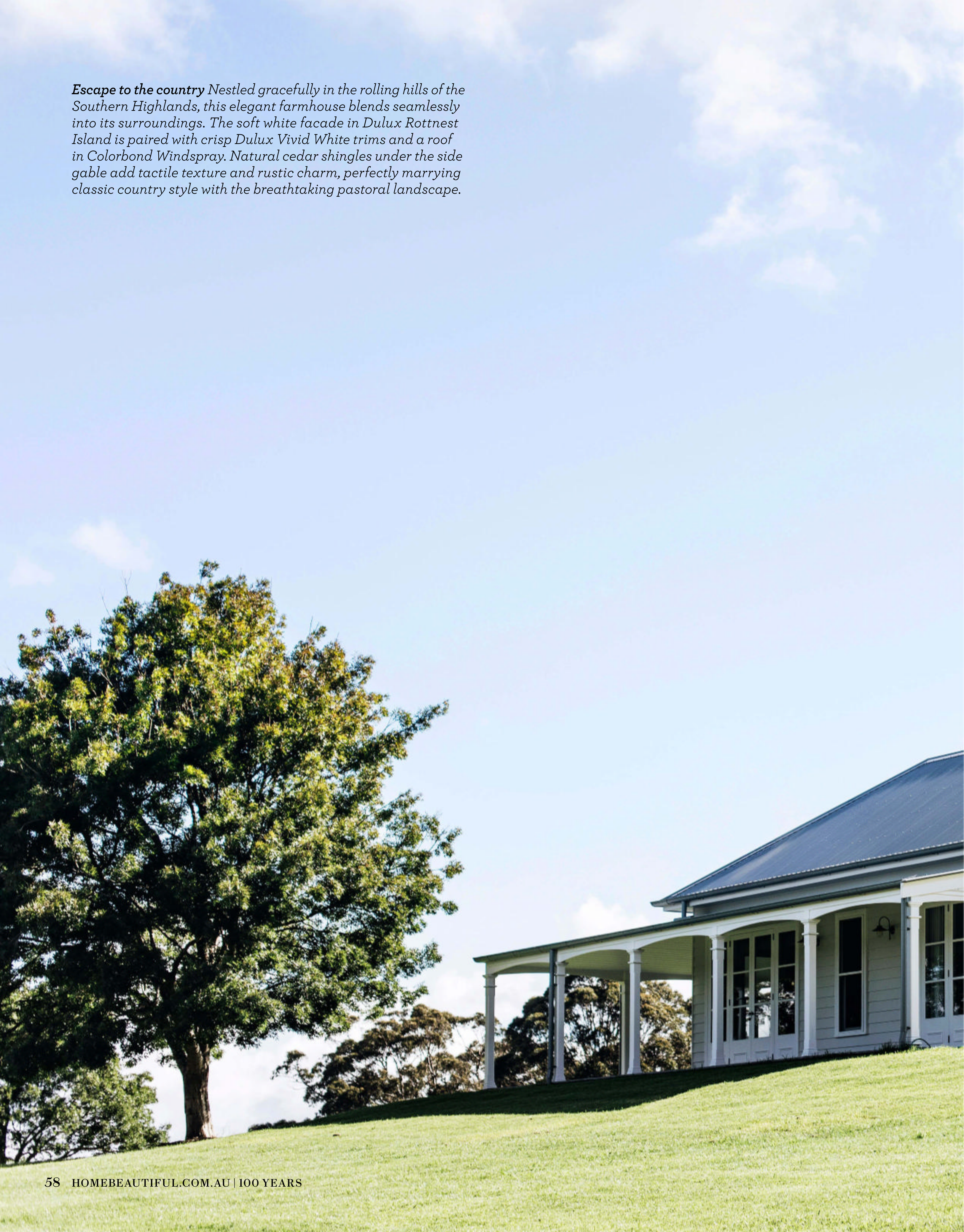
BEAUTIFUL HOMES

THE STORIES, STYLE AND LOVE THAT MAKE A HOME BEAUTIFUL

PHOTOGRAPHY ABBIE MELLÉ

HOME GROWN
PAGE 58 →



Escape to the country *Nestled gracefully in the rolling hills of the Southern Highlands, this elegant farmhouse blends seamlessly into its surroundings. The soft white facade in Dulux Rottnest Island is paired with crisp Dulux Vivid White trims and a roof in Colorbond Windspray. Natural cedar shingles under the side gable add tactile texture and rustic charm, perfectly marrying classic country style with the breathtaking pastoral landscape.*

Home grown

Built as a rural refuge for a family of five, this holiday home in the Southern Highlands radiates quiet charm

STORY REBECCA HOOTON | PHOTOGRAPHY ABBIE MELLÉ

Yearning for a peaceful country escape from their busy city lives, Natasha and Brian set their sights on the scenic Southern Highlands in NSW. "We wanted a place where our then-young boys could ride dirt bikes, make bonfires, camp and help with non-city things like feeding and looking after cattle, fencing and starting a veggie garden," says Natasha.

They chose the area for its "unspoilt" landscape. "It's the nearest we could find to the green grass feeling of England, with especially colourful autumns," she shares. The setting is so picturesque, it's where the Australian film *Babe* was shot.

As the couple's three boys grew into young men, Natasha and Brian dreamt of building a spacious, welcoming farmhouse where they could gather comfortably for years to come. They enlisted Halvorsen Interiors and Life Home Builders to bring that vision to life, with construction kicking off in late 2023.

The process came with its challenges. "We had two boys do their final HSC exams and we had to deal with Covid-induced supply issues," recalls Natasha. There were also months of rain, but a solid team and smart planning kept things moving. >

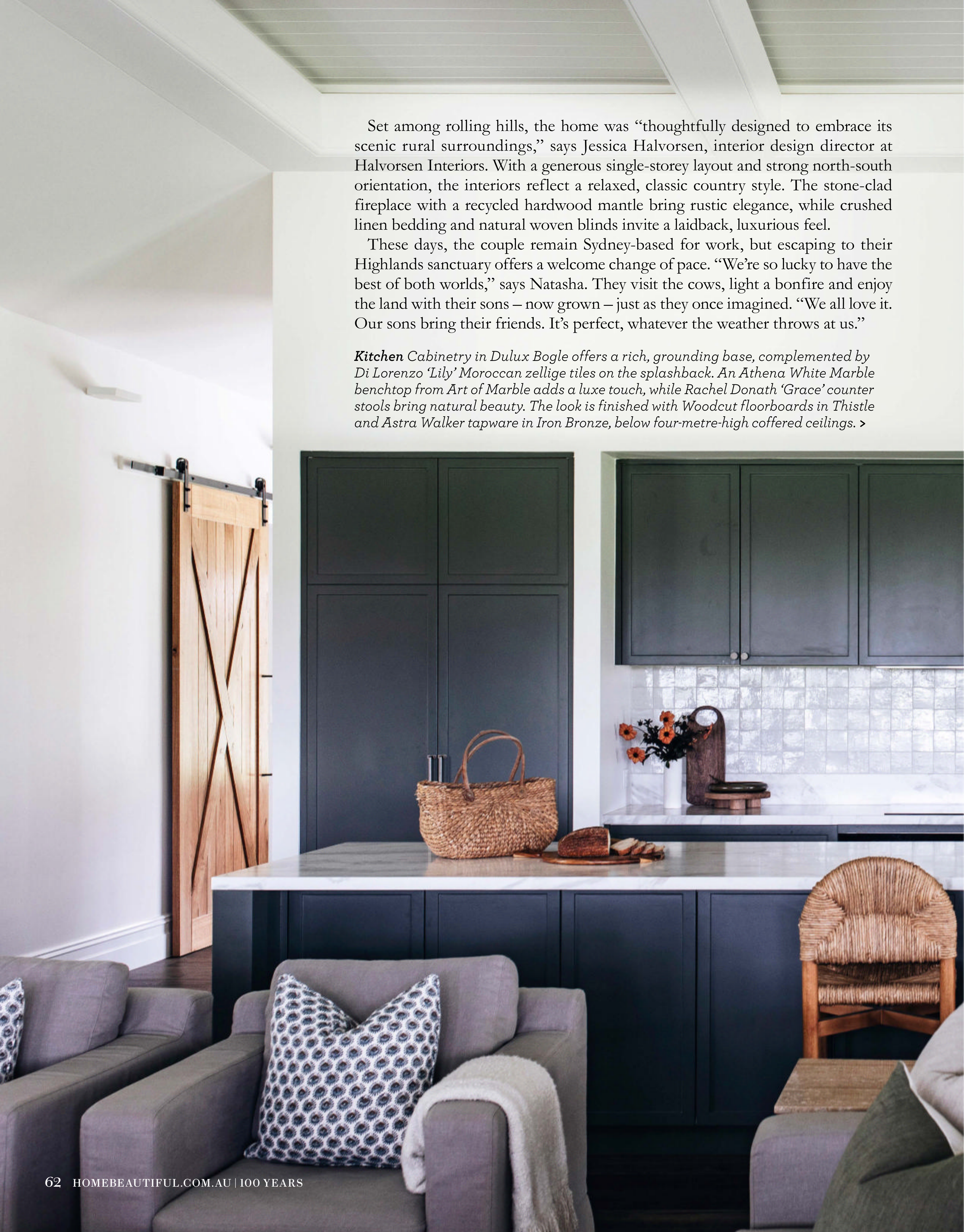
Living *Around a coffee table from Indigo Love Collectors, Molmic 'Sherman' sofas upholstered in Zepel 'Kanvas' fabric in Cement are styled with Città and Walter G cushions (top). Custom curtains from Blinds by Peter Meyer frame the French doors, while sash windows feature 'Urban' Roman blinds from the same maker. An 'Isla' lamp from The Montauk Lighting Co tops the MCM House 'Axol' side table (bottom right) and a Bloomingdales Lighting 'Blaze' floor lamp and LED uplights from Lighting Collective add a wash of warmth (opposite). The hero, however, is the Stuv 21 fireplace clad in Eco Outdoor 'Finch' stone.* ***Dining*** *A rustic table teams with Wisteria 'Trent' chairs (bottom left).* **>**

"We wanted to build a family home that centred around a big fireplace that you could gather around"

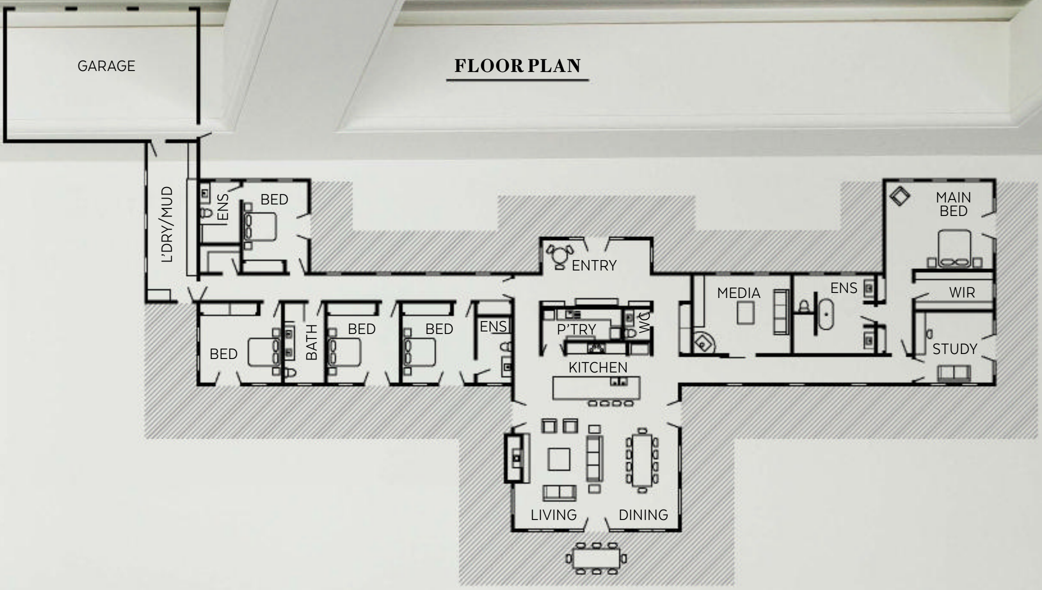
NATASHA, HOMEOWNER

Set among rolling hills, the home was “thoughtfully designed to embrace its scenic rural surroundings,” says Jessica Halvorsen, interior design director at Halvorsen Interiors. With a generous single-storey layout and strong north-south orientation, the interiors reflect a relaxed, classic country style. The stone-clad fireplace with a recycled hardwood mantle bring rustic elegance, while crushed linen bedding and natural woven blinds invite a laidback, luxurious feel.

These days, the couple remain Sydney-based for work, but escaping to their Highlands sanctuary offers a welcome change of pace. “We’re so lucky to have the best of both worlds,” says Natasha. They visit the cows, light a bonfire and enjoy the land with their sons – now grown – just as they once imagined. “We all love it. Our sons bring their friends. It’s perfect, whatever the weather throws at us.”



Kitchen *Cabinetry in Dulux Bogle offers a rich, grounding base, complemented by Di Lorenzo ‘Lily’ Moroccan zellige tiles on the splashback. An Athena White Marble benchtop from Art of Marble adds a luxe touch, while Rachel Donath ‘Grace’ counter stools bring natural beauty. The look is finished with Woodcut floorboards in Thistle and Astra Walker tapware in Iron Bronze, below four-metre-high coffered ceilings.* **>**


FLOOR PLAN
GARAGE
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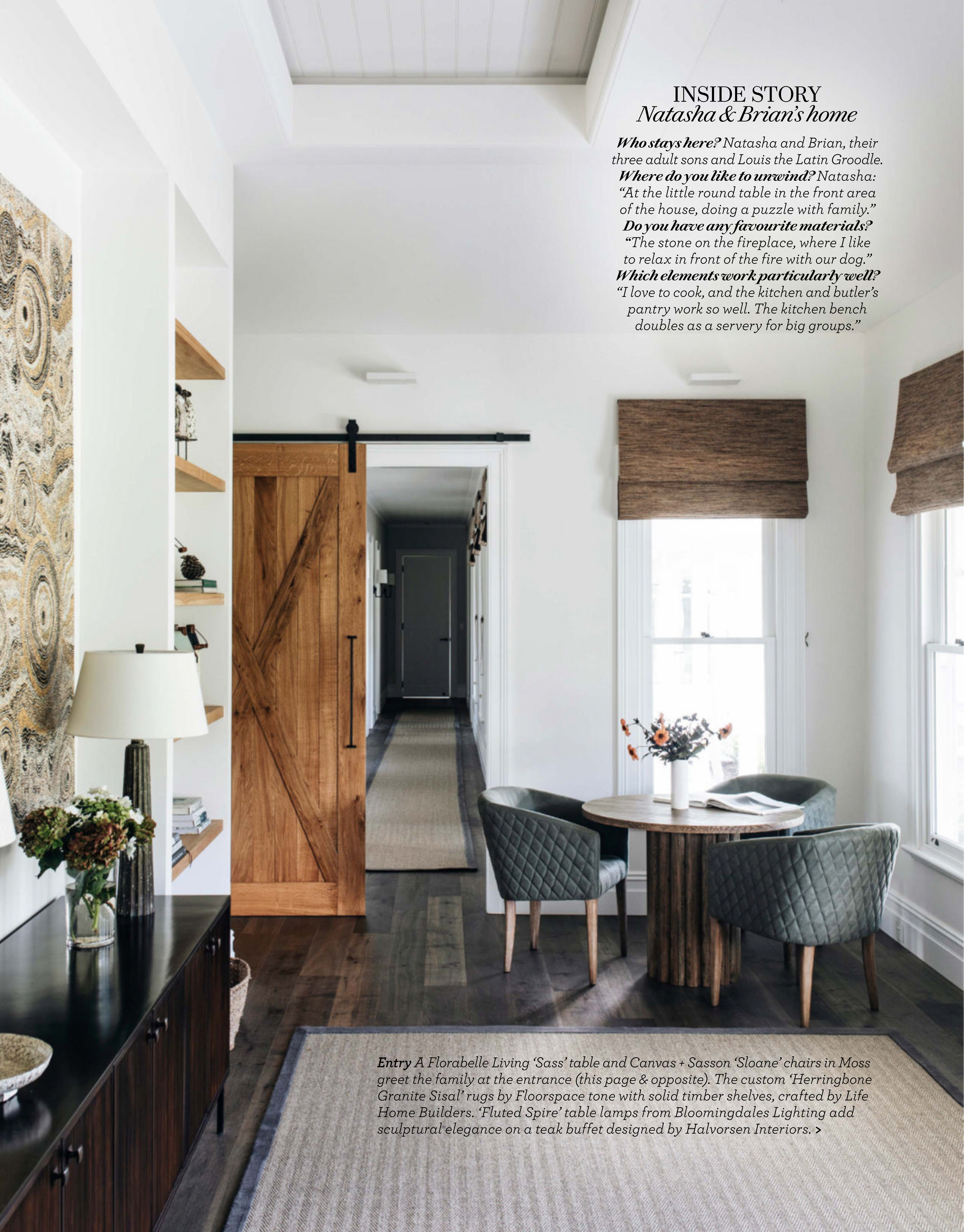


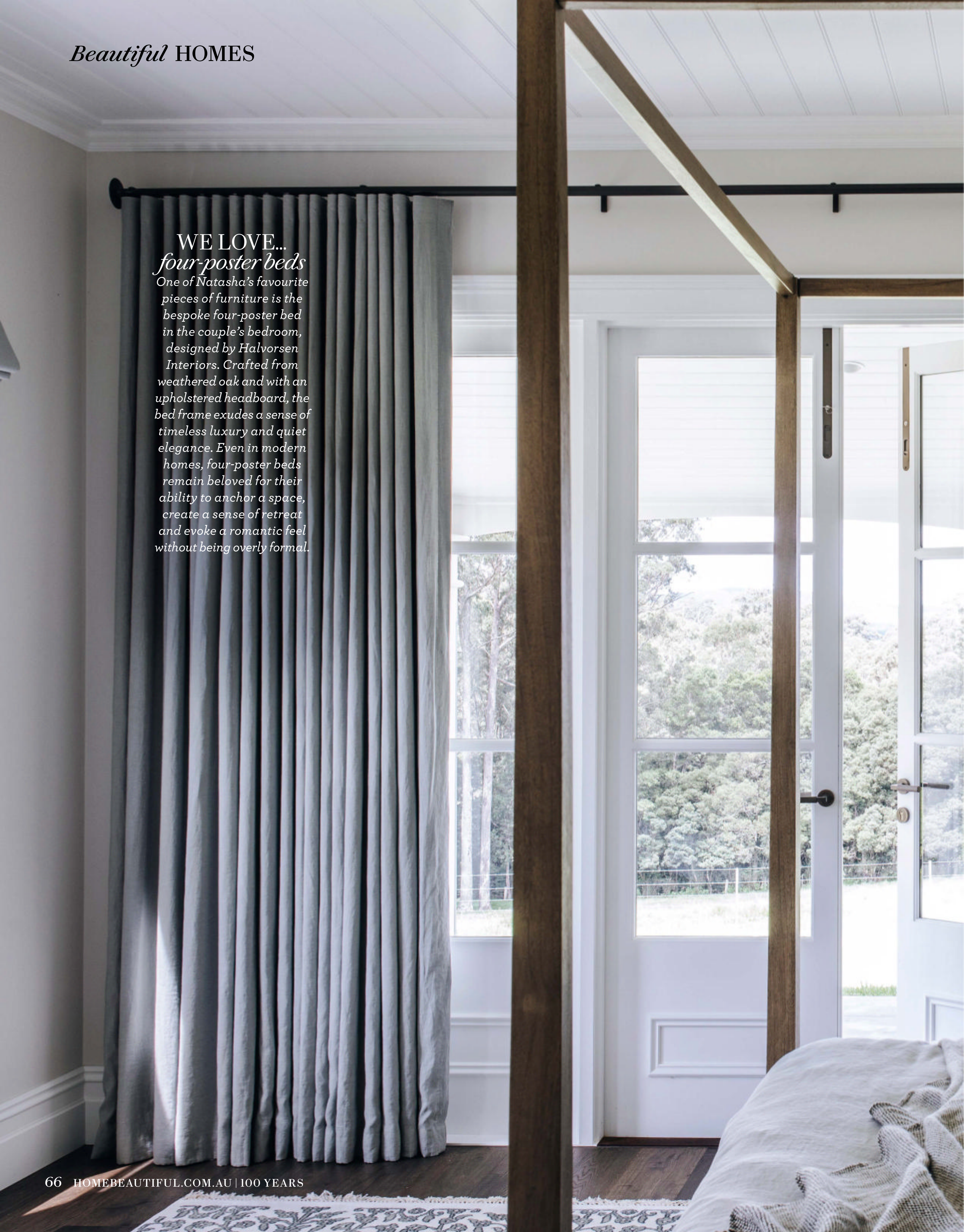
INSIDE STORY
Natasha & Brian's home

Who stays here? *Natasha and Brian, their three adult sons and Louis the Latin Groodle.*
Where do you like to unwind? *Natasha: "At the little round table in the front area of the house, doing a puzzle with family."*
Do you have any favourite materials? *"The stone on the fireplace, where I like to relax in front of the fire with our dog."*
Which elements work particularly well? *"I love to cook, and the kitchen and butler's pantry work so well. The kitchen bench doubles as a servery for big groups."*

Entry *A Florabelle Living 'Sass' table and Canvas + Sasson 'Sloane' chairs in Moss greet the family at the entrance (this page & opposite). The custom 'Herringbone Granite Sisal' rugs by Floorspace tone with solid timber shelves, crafted by Life Home Builders. 'Fluted Spire' table lamps from Bloomingdales Lighting add sculptural elegance on a teak buffet designed by Halvorsen Interiors.* **>**

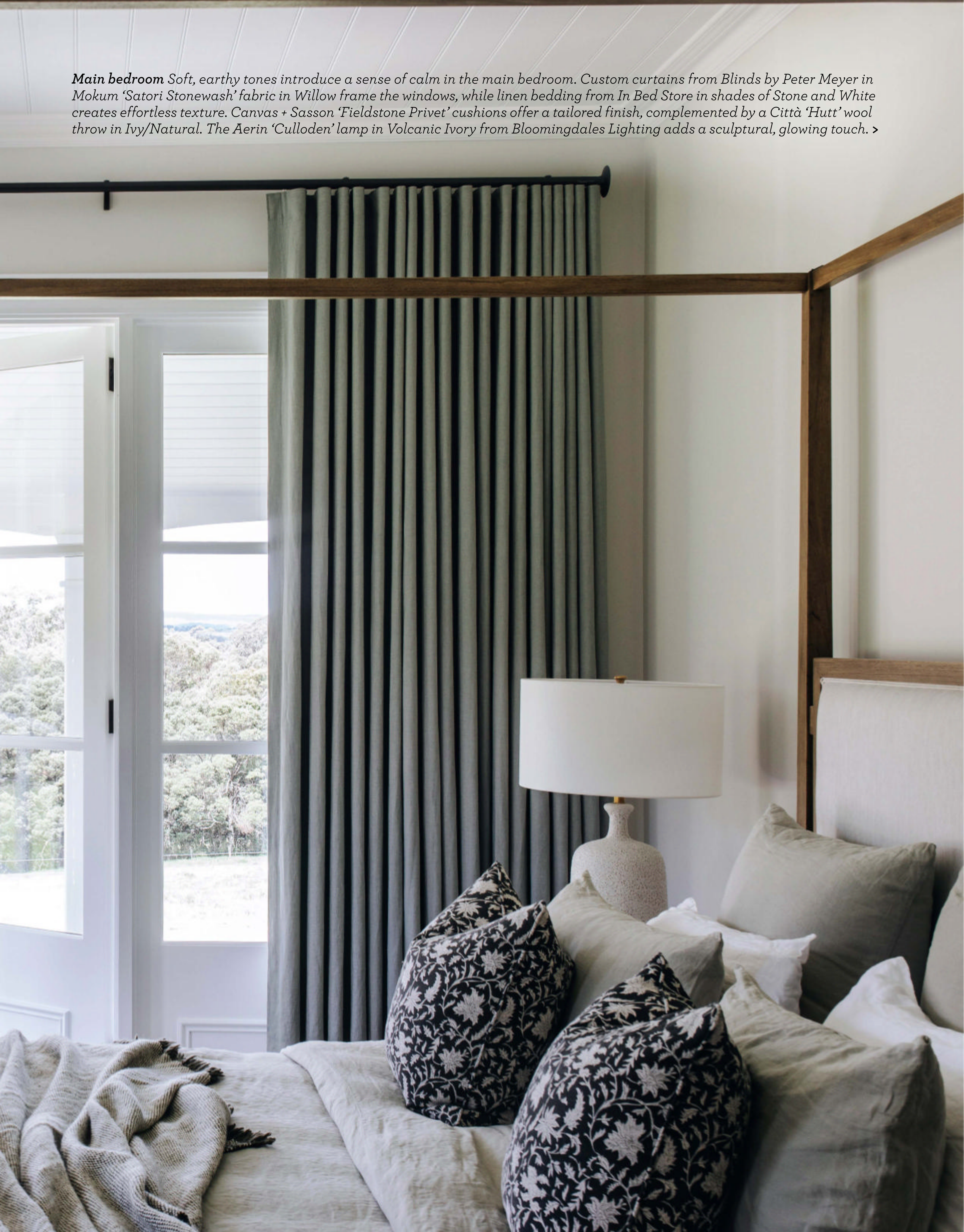
CURATE
Suzanne Turley Private Gardens of Aotearoa

ARTWORK ARTIST UNKNOWN

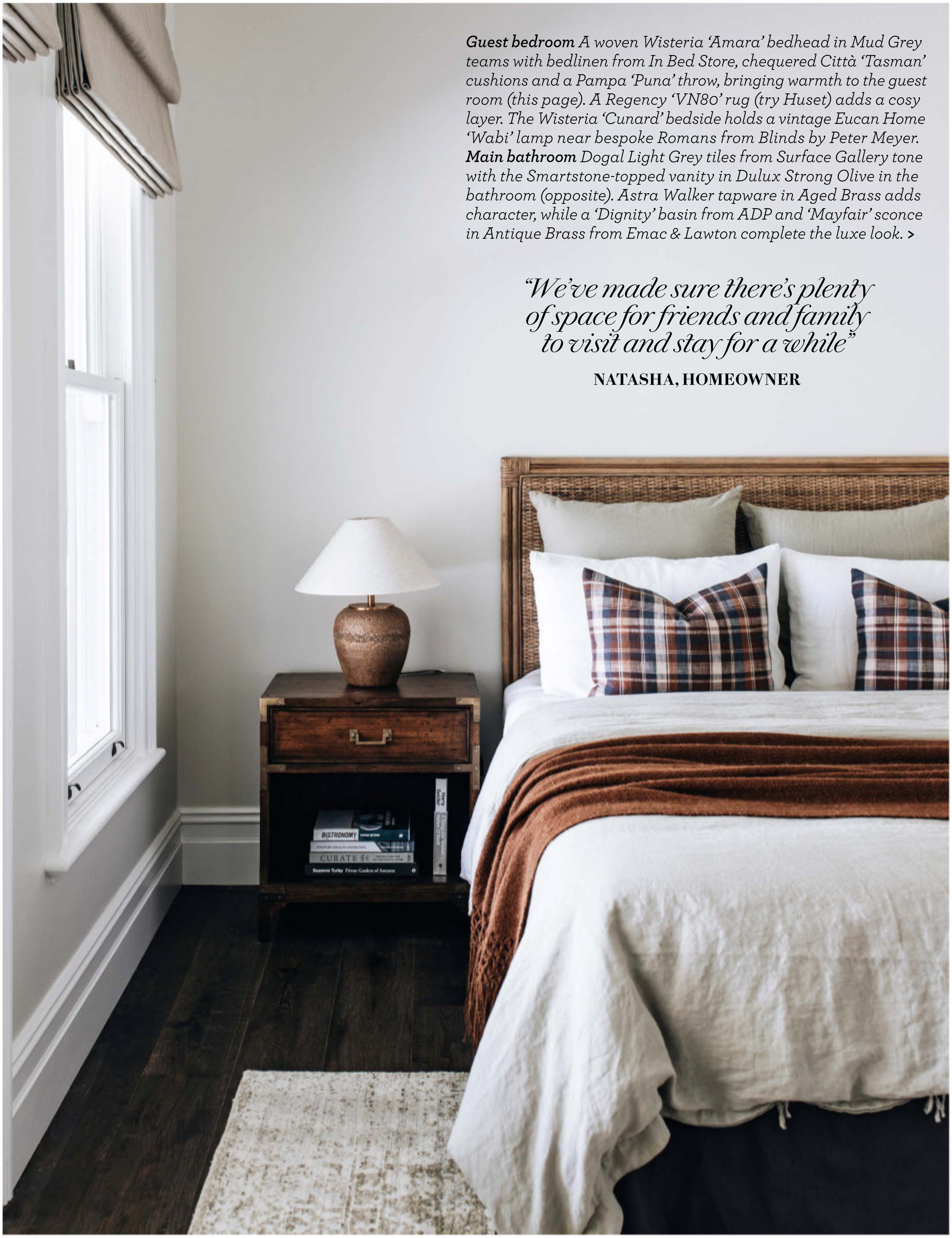


WE LOVE...
four-poster beds

One of Natasha's favourite pieces of furniture is the bespoke four-poster bed in the couple's bedroom, designed by Halvorsen Interiors. Crafted from weathered oak and with an upholstered headboard, the bed frame exudes a sense of timeless luxury and quiet elegance. Even in modern homes, four-poster beds remain beloved for their ability to anchor a space, create a sense of retreat and evoke a romantic feel without being overly formal.

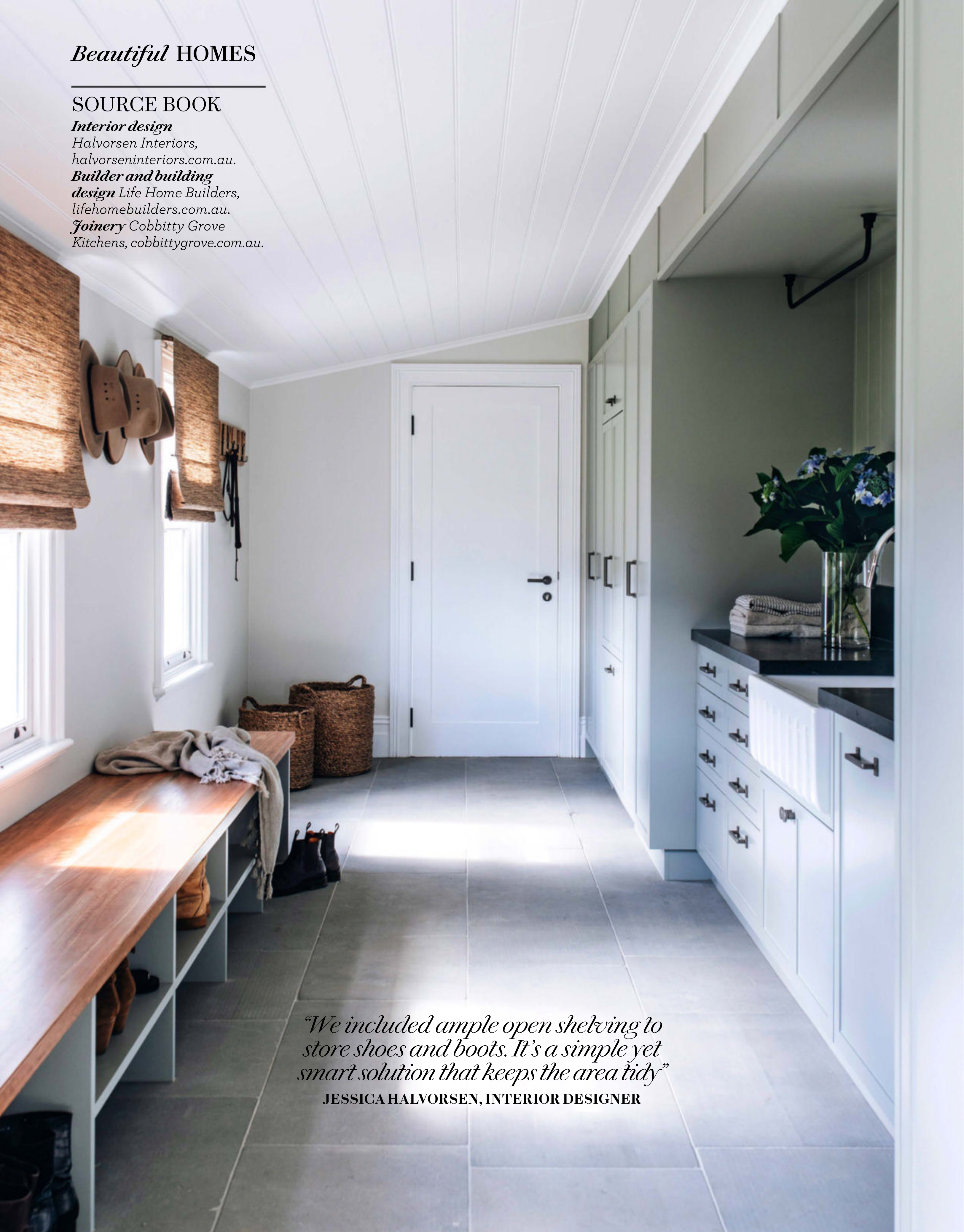


Main bedroom *Soft, earthy tones introduce a sense of calm in the main bedroom. Custom curtains from Blinds by Peter Meyer in Mokum 'Satori Stonewash' fabric in Willow frame the windows, while linen bedding from In Bed Store in shades of Stone and White creates effortless texture. Canvas + Sasson 'Fieldstone Privet' cushions offer a tailored finish, complemented by a Città 'Hutt' wool throw in Ivy/Natural. The Aerin 'Culloden' lamp in Volcanic Ivory from Bloomingdales Lighting adds a sculptural, glowing touch.* **>**



***Guest bedroom** A woven Wisteria 'Amara' bedhead in Mud Grey teams with bedlinen from In Bed Store, chequered Città 'Tasman' cushions and a Pampa 'Puna' throw, bringing warmth to the guest room (this page). A Regency 'VN80' rug (try Huset) adds a cosy layer. The Wisteria 'Cunard' bedside holds a vintage Eucan Home 'Wabi' lamp near bespoke Romans from Blinds by Peter Meyer. **Main bathroom** Dogal Light Grey tiles from Surface Gallery tone with the Smartstone-topped vanity in Dulux Strong Olive in the bathroom (opposite). Astra Walker tapware in Aged Brass adds character, while a 'Dignity' basin from ADP and 'Mayfair' sconce in Antique Brass from Emac & Lawton complete the luxe look.* >

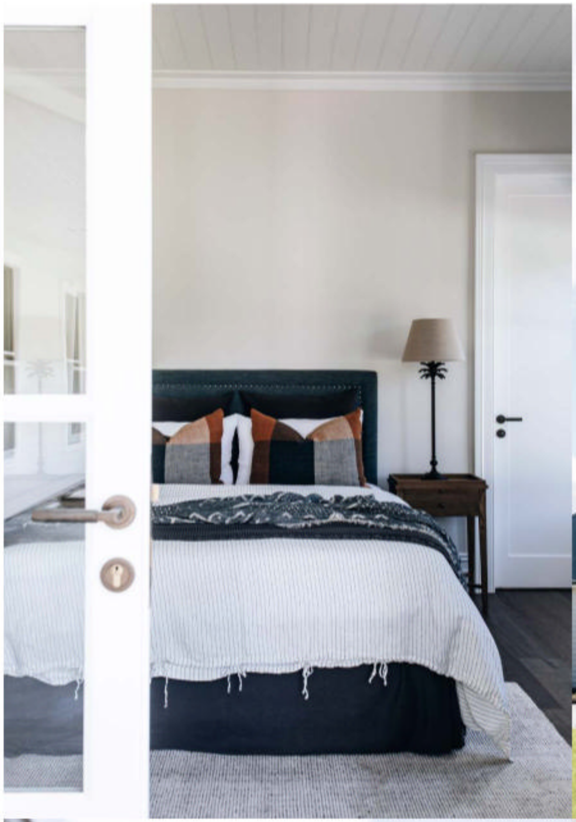
> *"We've made sure there's plenty of space for friends and family to visit and stay for a while"*
>
> **NATASHA, HOMEOWNER**

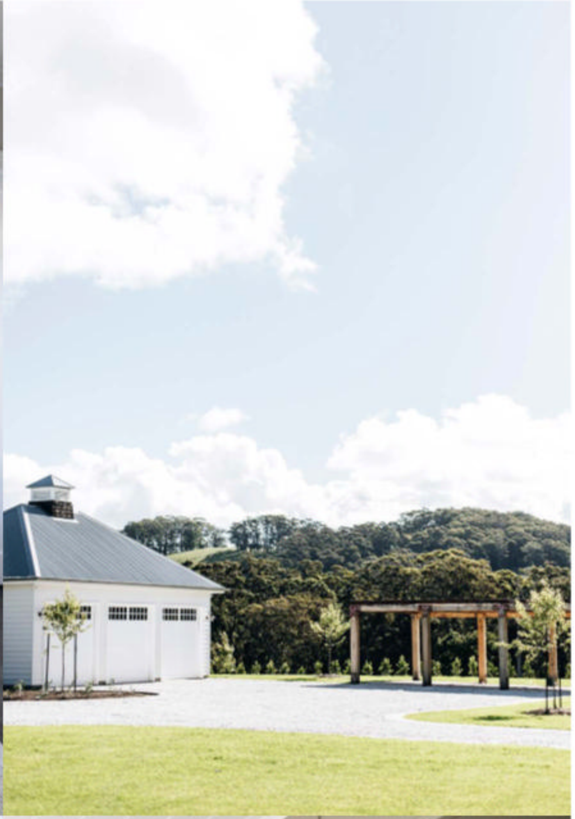


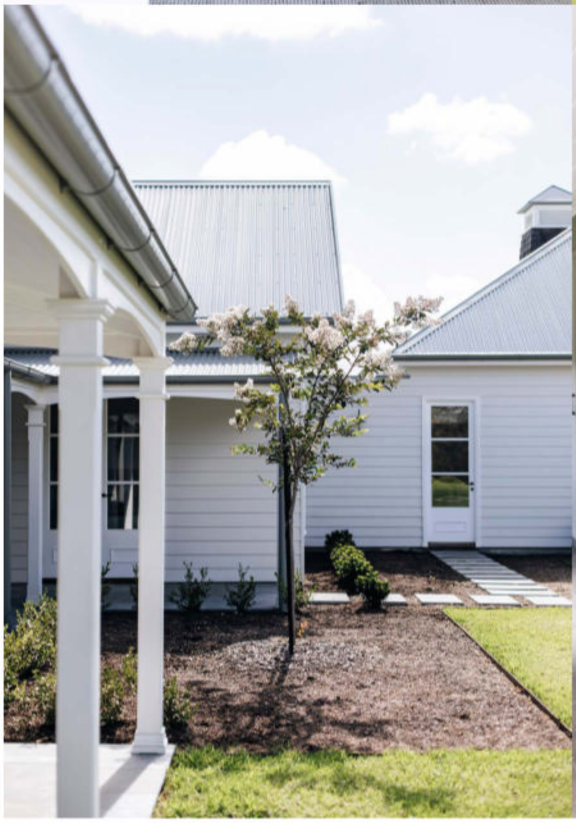
SOURCE BOOK

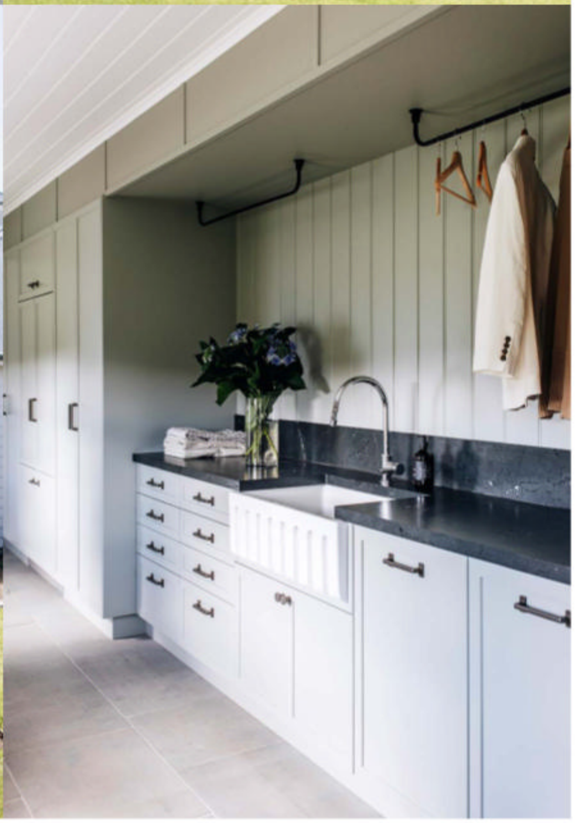
Interior design *Halvorsen Interiors, halvorseninteriors.com.au.* ***Builder and building design*** *Life Home Builders, lifehomebuilders.com.au.* ***Joinery*** *Cobbitty Grove Kitchens, cobbittygrove.com.au.*

> *"We included ample open shelving to store shoes and boots. It's a simple yet smart solution that keeps the area tidy"*
> **JESSICA HALVORSEN, INTERIOR DESIGNER**







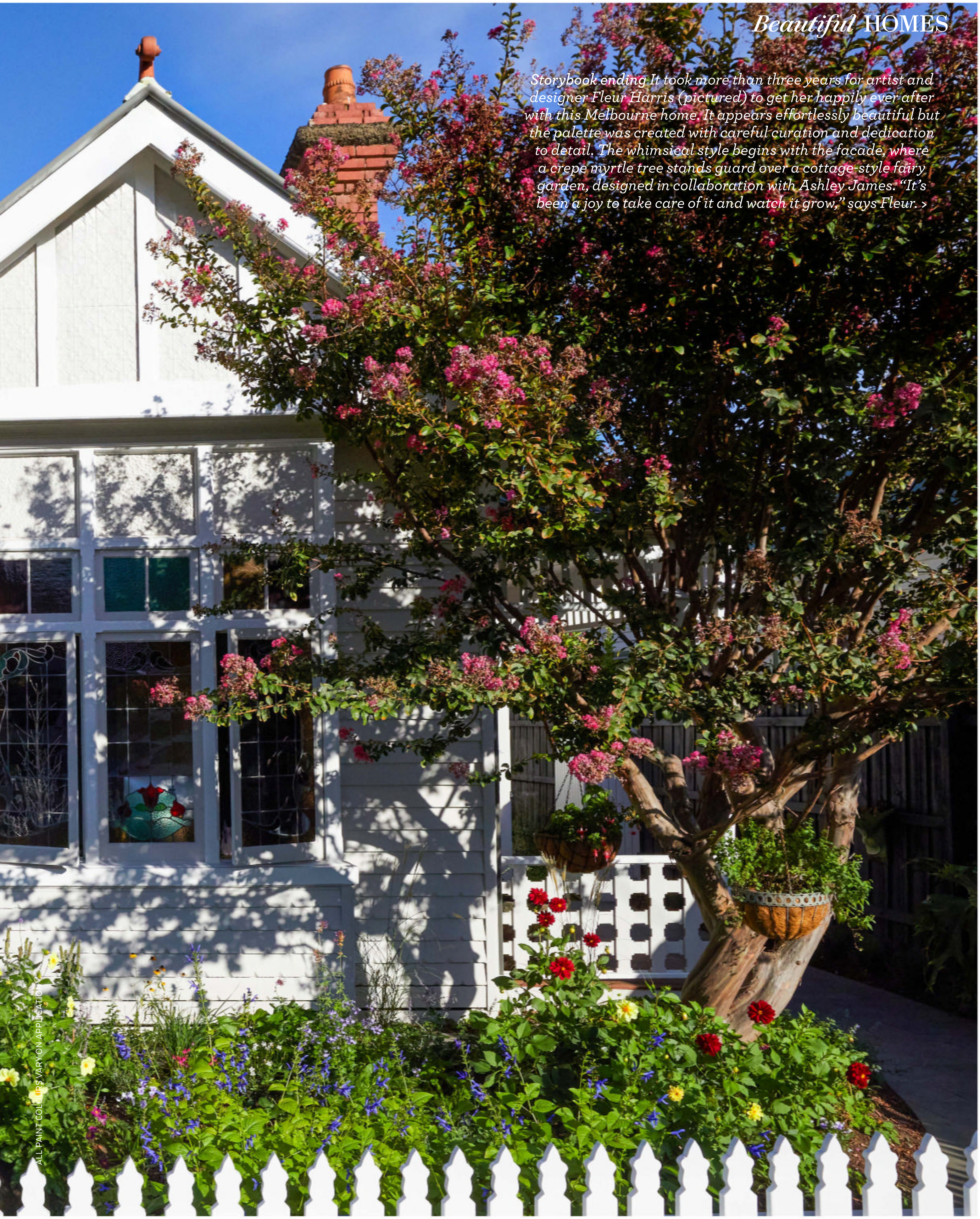


Guest bedroom *The serene guest room (top left) features a Florabelle 'Lennox' bedhead and Città handwoven 'Miro' cushions. A Tallira 'Garcia' rug in Oyster from The Rug Collection grounds the room, with an Emac & Lawton 'Casablanca' table lamp and French Country Collections 'Saskia' bedside table finishing the look.* ***Alfresco*** *Clad in reclaimed timber, the carport (top right) houses farm vehicles and complements the home's newly planted gardens (bottom left).* ***Laundry/mudroom*** *In the hardworking laundry and mudroom (bottom right & opposite), Dulux Pozieres cabinetry pairs with SNB Stone Negresco quartzite benchtops and Surface Gallery 'Toulon' tumbled floor tiles.*

FAIRYLAND FLAIR

Hard work and clever design underpin a palette of whimsy and charm in this Victorian heritage home

STORY **BRITTANY SMITH** | STYLING **HEATHER NETTE KING** | PHOTOGRAPHY **ARMELLE HABIB**



Storybook ending It took more than three years for artist and designer Fleur Harris (pictured) to get her happily ever after with this Melbourne home. It appears effortlessly beautiful but the palette was created with careful curation and dedication to detail. The whimsical style begins with the facade, where a crepe myrtle tree stands guard over a cottage-style fairy garden, designed in collaboration with Ashley James. "It's been a joy to take care of it and watch it grow," says Fleur. >

ALL PAINT COLOURS VARY ON APPLICATION

A chorus of cooing pigeons echoed down the chimney as artist Fleur Harris walked through the house that would become her home. As first impressions go, this one left much to be desired. The Victorian build had been untouched for three years and in that time nature had taken over. "There was years of pigeon poo piled up in the fireplaces," Fleur recalls. "There were mice and spiders, a backyard full of weeds, mushrooms growing out of the grout in the bathroom." Underneath the grime, the home ticked all the boxes for Fleur, her husband Dave and their son, Baillieux. They wanted extra space and this delivered in spades with five bedrooms. It also had high ceilings and all the architectural charm you'd expect from a house built in 1908. "I said to my husband, 'I think I've found the house for us but it'll take a lot of work'," she says. They put in an offer and, once accepted, got started.

The first step was simply making the house livable with thorough scrubbing and pigeon removal. After that, the ethos was slow and steady. They waited two years for the local council to approve their plans due to strict regulations, but this suited Fleur just fine. "We got our bearings before we did the renovation," she explains. "We wanted to live in the home to get an understanding of how we like to use the space, where the light comes in. That was one of the best decisions we made."

Once they got council approval, they worked from bottom to top with the help of BD Building Design. The home was on a slope so restumping was the first port of call. From there, the plaster had to be removed, which revealed flimsy joists and studs that needed to be relaminated. They tackled each challenge and, at the same time, wired up a thorough and considered lighting scheme. With the plaster off, they also cut the gas and installed a solar network. The footprint of the original four rooms, plus the hallway, stayed the same but the modern rear extension was rejigged to suit. "We almost rebuilt the house except for the facade and roof," shares Fleur.

Finally, it was time for Fleur's favourite aspect: the interiors. She built the palette of each room around a single hero material or piece, consciously sourcing items she truly loved. "It's harmoniously eclectic," she says. "There's treasures from travels, that I've made, that I've collected. It comes together in a way that makes sense."

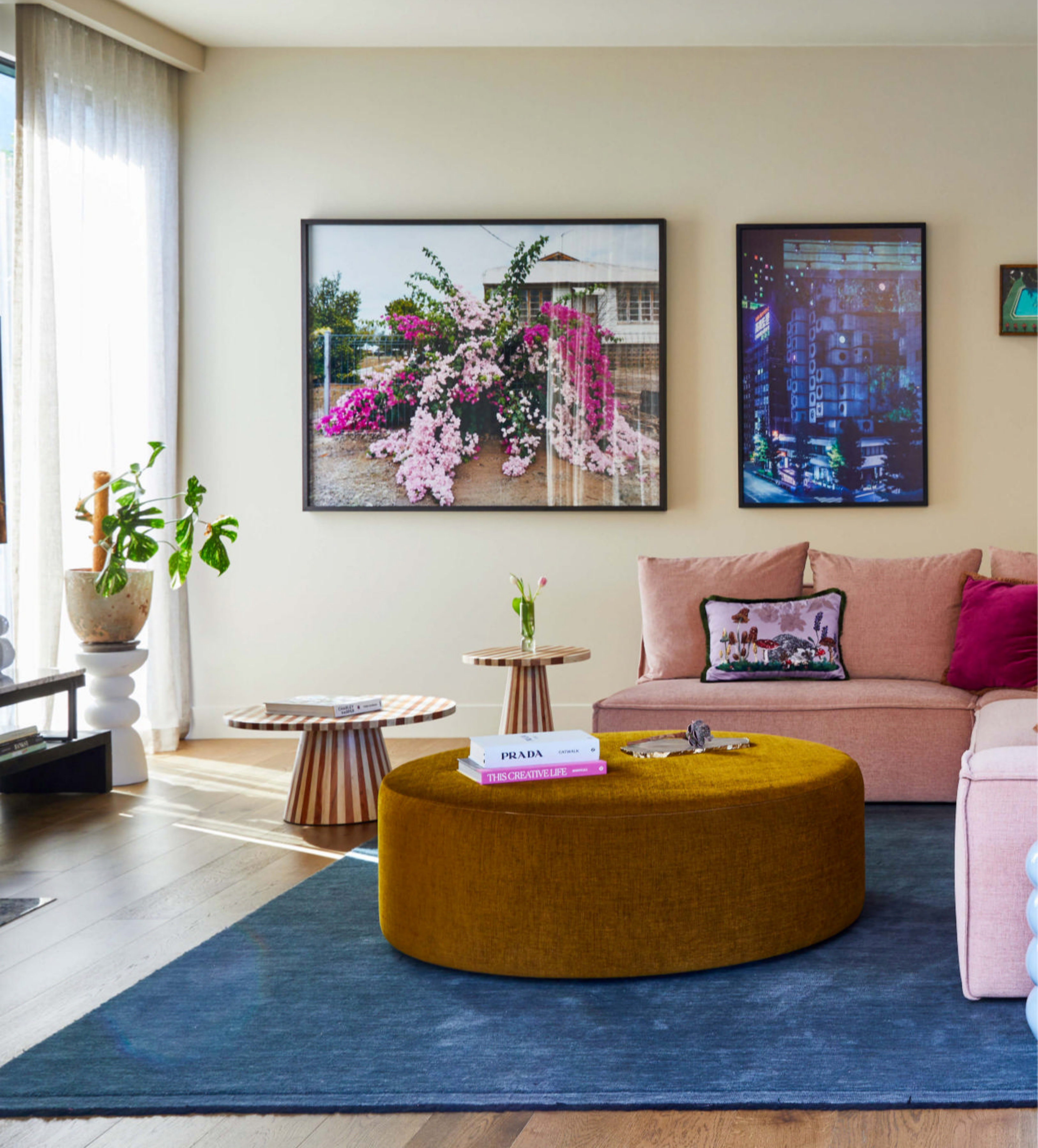
Now, after 13 months of work, Fleur's vision is complete. With a touch of whimsy and wonder in every corner, the home is a dream come true and a source of pride. "I hope it can stand the test of time for another 100 years and be enjoyed by a family in the future," shares Fleur. ***For more stunning homes, visit www.homebeautiful.com.au.***

Entry *Fleur's upcycling projects are showcased in the home, such as the front door, which was original to the house. Working with Arcadia Leadlight & Stained Glass, she restored the original leadlight from her own childhood home and placed this above the front door. Dappled light streams in through these colourful windows and sheer linen curtains from Floorworld, casting a warm glow over the walls, finished in Resene Linen. The Arbre French oak floorboards in Veile, sourced from Circa, add to the warm welcome.* >

The Flower Room

ARTWORK (RIGHT) **JOANNA COLE** OTHER ARTWORK (LEFT) **ARTIST UNKNOWN** BACKGROUND (OPPOSITE) CLARKE & CLARKE 'PASSIFLORA' FABRIC, JAMES DUNLOP TEXTILES

Living *Walls finished in Resene Triple Blanc set a neutral base for the pink and blue stars of this space. For the former, a 'Rufus' L-shaped couch from Harbro is decorated with Adairs and Anthropologie cushions in rosy shades. This is complemented by the framed Matthew Stanton photograph, 'Mareeba (Muluridji Country)'. Cool blue tones come in the form of an Adairs side table, which sits atop a Carpet Court 'Silvio' rug in Navy. The hues are reflected in the Tom Blachford artwork. Warm brass accents create contrast, such as the brass panel on the Wood Steel & Stone door, which pairs tonally with the 'Armstrong' ottoman from Harbro.*



INSIDE STORY
Fleur & Dave's home

Who lives here? *Artist and children's clothing designer Fleur Harris, her husband Dave, head of digital learning and practice, and their son Baillieux, nine.*

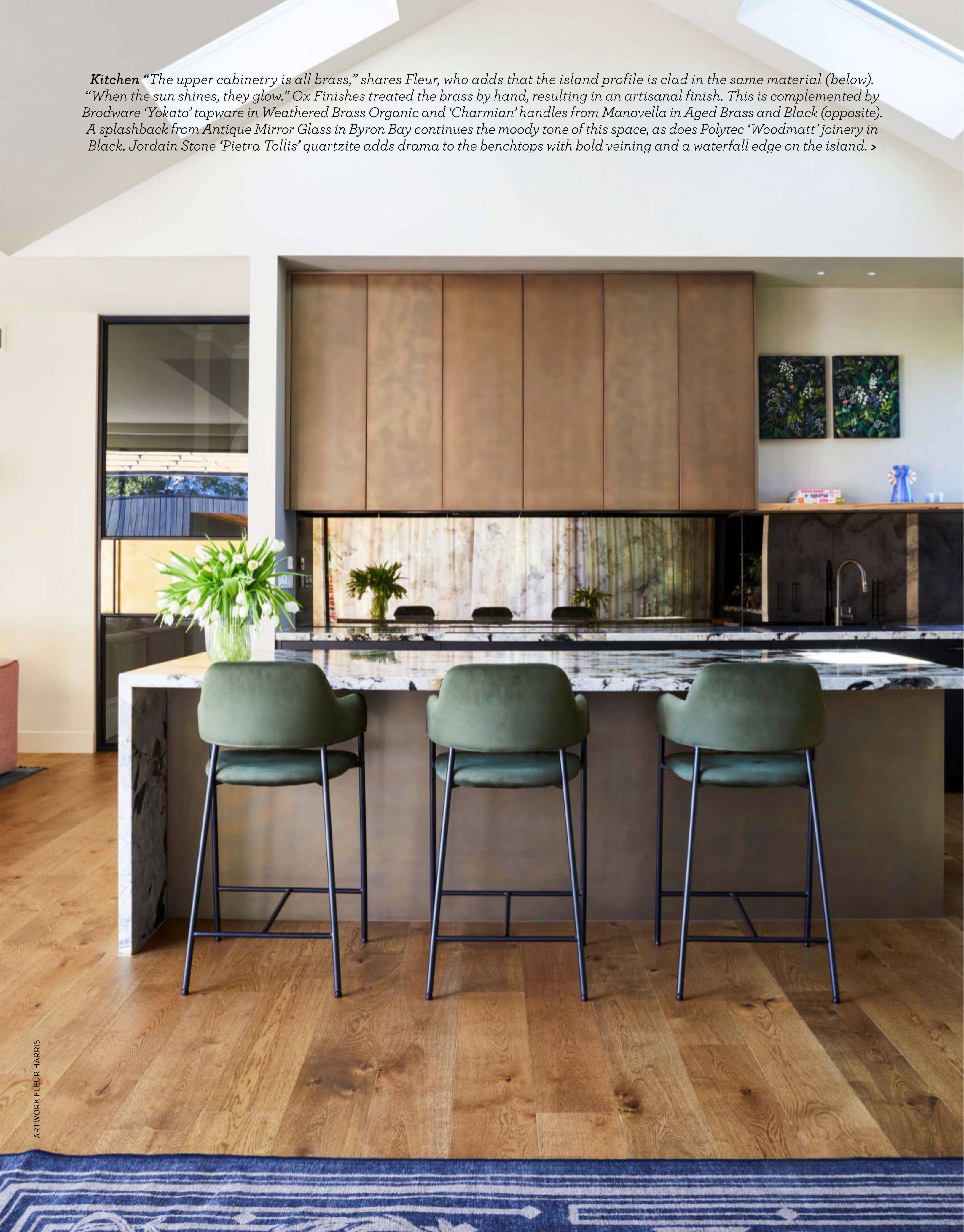
What's your design style? *Fleur: "Rich with detail and relaxed but with an air of sophistication."*

Weekend ritual? *"We are big entertainers so most weekends we have people over. One of my great joys is to look after people in our home and cook a beautiful meal."*

Favourite room? *"I think it's my bedroom. I love getting into bed at night and looking at the ceiling and seeing how pretty it is."* >

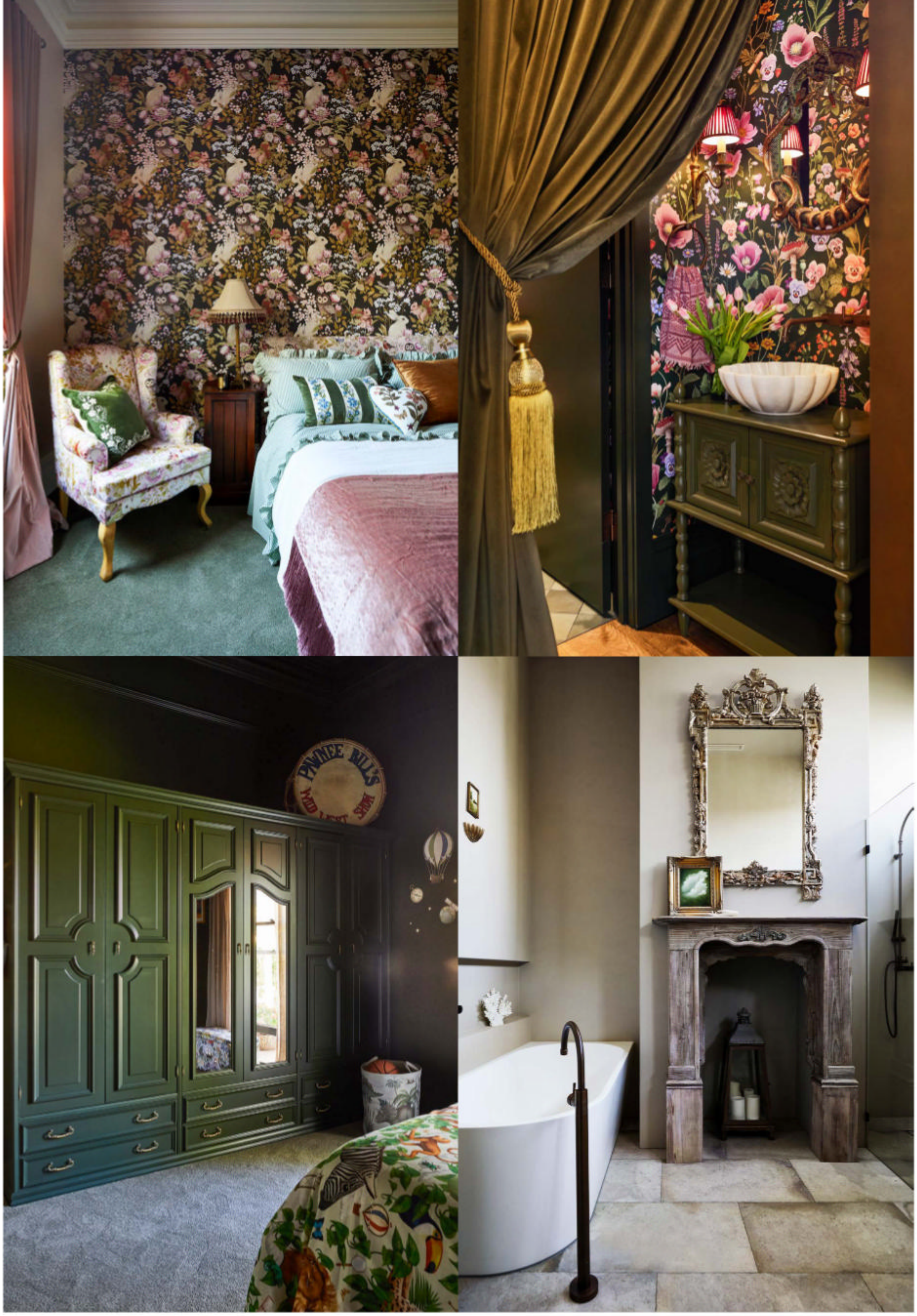
ARTWORK (FAR RIGHT) 'TURKMENISTAN POOLSIDE' BY SAFFINE NYDEGGER

> *"You could see how the house could really shine if it was given the right kind of love"*
>
> **FLEUR HARRIS**



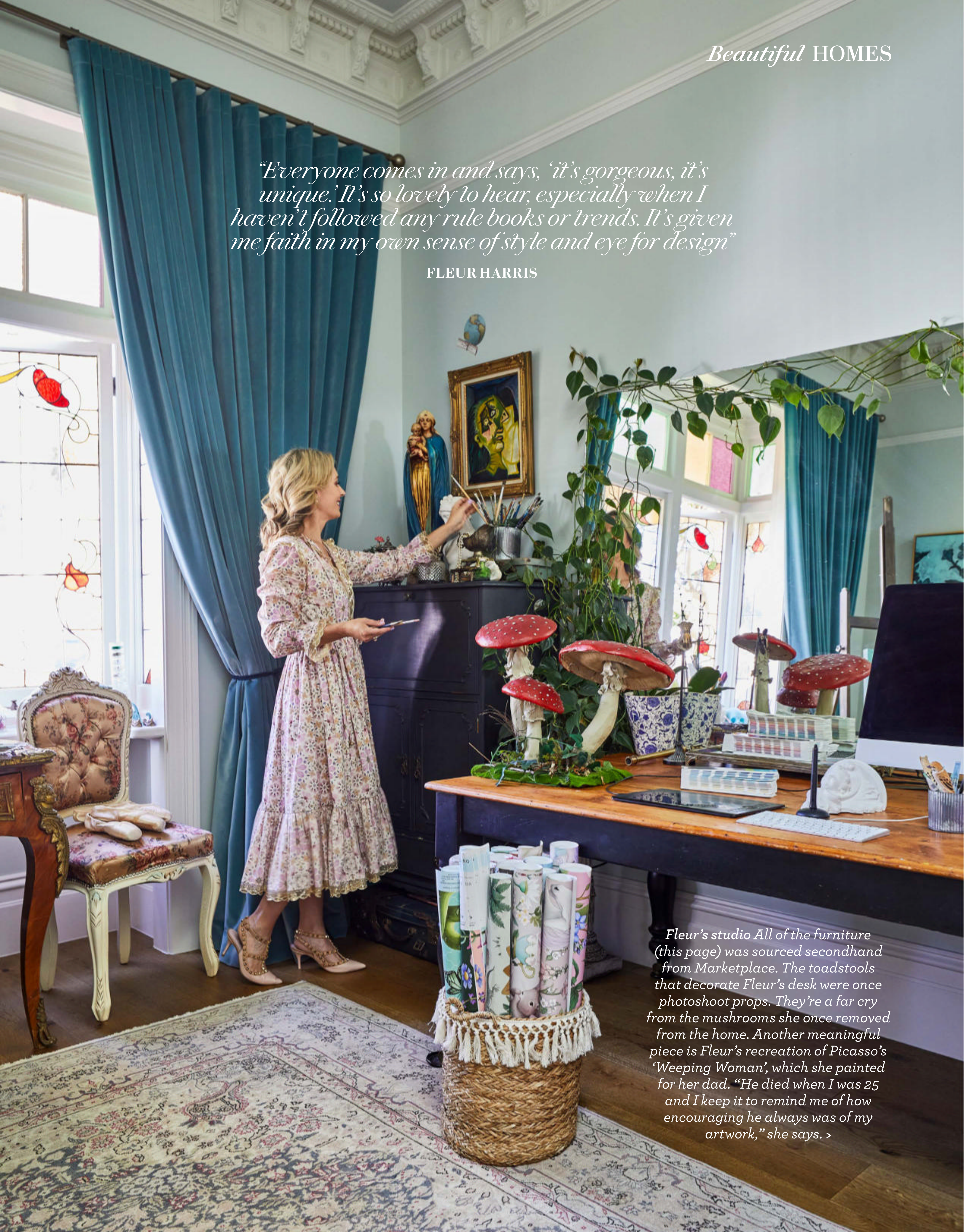
Kitchen *"The upper cabinetry is all brass," shares Fleur, who adds that the island profile is clad in the same material (below). "When the sun shines, they glow." Ox Finishes treated the brass by hand, resulting in an artisanal finish. This is complemented by Brodware 'Yokato' tapware in Weathered Brass Organic and 'Charmian' handles from Manovella in Aged Brass and Black (opposite). A splashback from Antique Mirror Glass in Byron Bay continues the moody tone of this space, as does Polytec 'Woodmatt' joinery in Black. Jordain Stone 'Pietra Tollis' quartzite adds drama to the benchtops with bold veining and a waterfall edge on the island.* >

ARTWORK FLEUR HARRIS



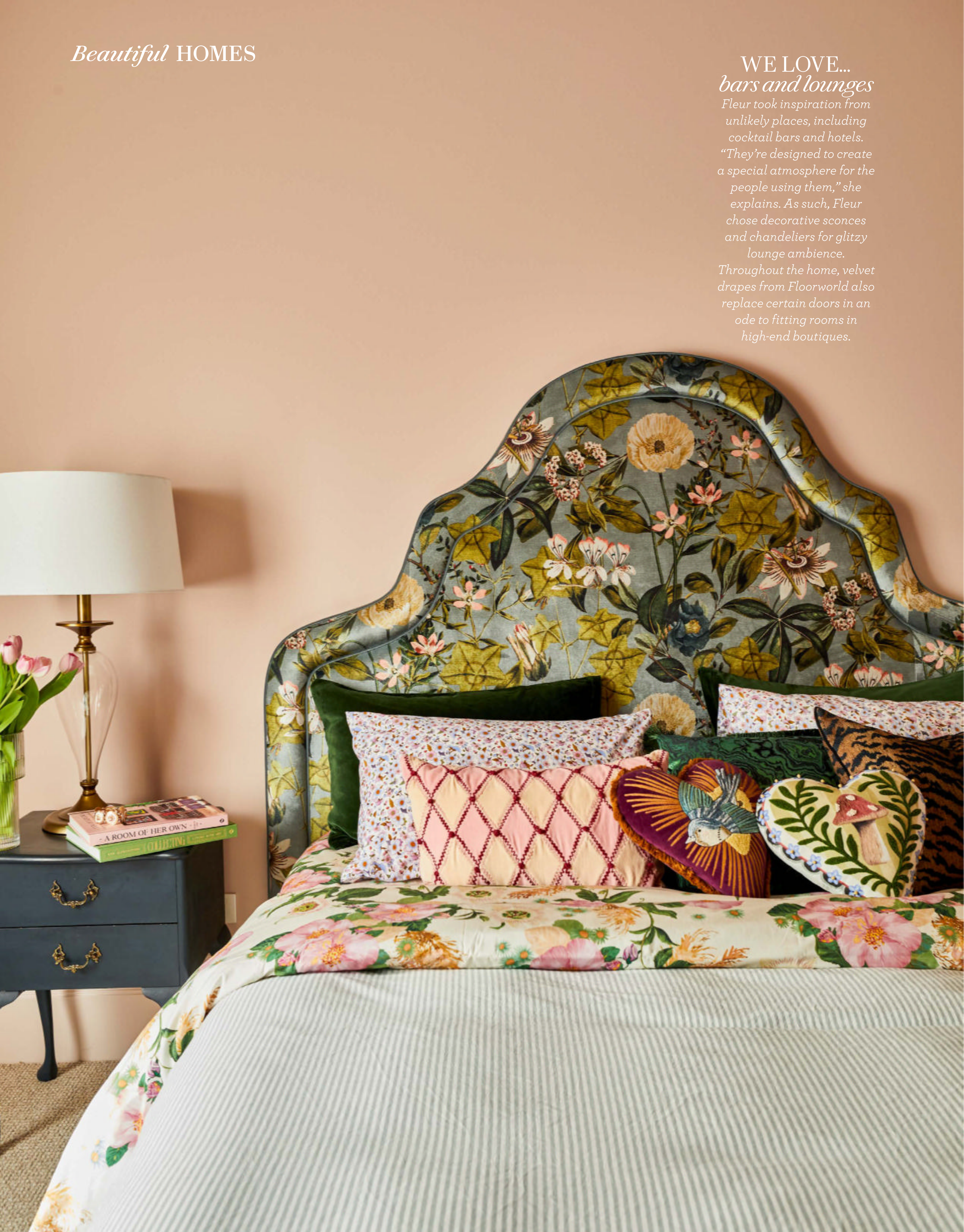
Guest bedroom *Fleur filled this space (top left) with many of her own designs, including her wallpaper collaboration with Milton & King, plus the bedhead and armchair from a collection she did with Adairs.* **Powder room** *The 'Serpentis' mirror from House of Hackney was one of the first things Fleur bought for the house (top right). It makes a bold statement alongside vintage lamps from Moonee Ponds Antiques and 'Garden of Dreams' wallpaper from Fleur's Milton & King range.* **Baillieux's bedroom** *Baillieux chose Resene Black Forest for his upcycled wardrobe (bottom left).* **Main bathroom** *The mirror from Manor on George looks grand against the Cemher microcement walls in half-strength Truffle (bottom right). An upcycled mantle completes the antique appeal.*

ARTWORK (BOTTOM RIGHT, LEFT) **MONIQUE FEDOR** (BOTTOM RIGHT, RIGHT) **TESSA BROWN**



> *"Everyone comes in and says, 'it's gorgeous, it's unique.' It's so lovely to hear, especially when I haven't followed any rule books or trends. It's given me faith in my own sense of style and eye for design"*
>
> **FLEUR HARRIS**

Fleur's studio *All of the furniture (this page) was sourced secondhand from Marketplace. The toadstools that decorate Fleur's desk were once photoshoot props. They're a far cry from the mushrooms she once removed from the home. Another meaningful piece is Fleur's recreation of Picasso's 'Weeping Woman', which she painted for her dad. "He died when I was 25 and I keep it to remind me of how encouraging he always was of my artwork," she says.* >

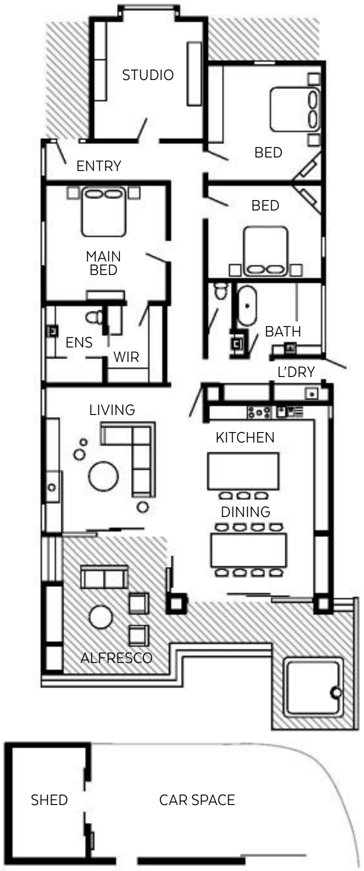


WE LOVE... *bars and lounges*

Fleur took inspiration from unlikely places, including cocktail bars and hotels. "They're designed to create a special atmosphere for the people using them," she explains. As such, Fleur chose decorative sconces and chandeliers for glitzy lounge ambience. Throughout the home, velvet drapes from Floorworld also replace certain doors in an ode to fitting rooms in high-end boutiques.

Main bedroom *Fleur and Dave's bedroom is pretty in pink thanks to walls finished in Resene Soothe (opposite, top left & bottom right). The Heatherly 'Giselle' bedhead is a point of difference against the blush tones. "It looks perfect with that contrast of colours," says Fleur. Bedding from Adairs, Kip & Co and Manor on George add more colour and pattern while gilded frames on mirrors and artworks by Fleur and Monique Fedor aid a sense of luxury.* ***Walk-in robe*** *The velvet drape in Rosewater by Floorworld leads into the walk-in robe (top right & bottom left), where blue and green reign supreme. Laminex joinery in 'Otway' with Aged Brass handles from Manovella complement the 'Garden of Elysium' wallpaper in Taupe Green from Fleur's range with Milton & King.* >

FLOOR PLAN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ENS
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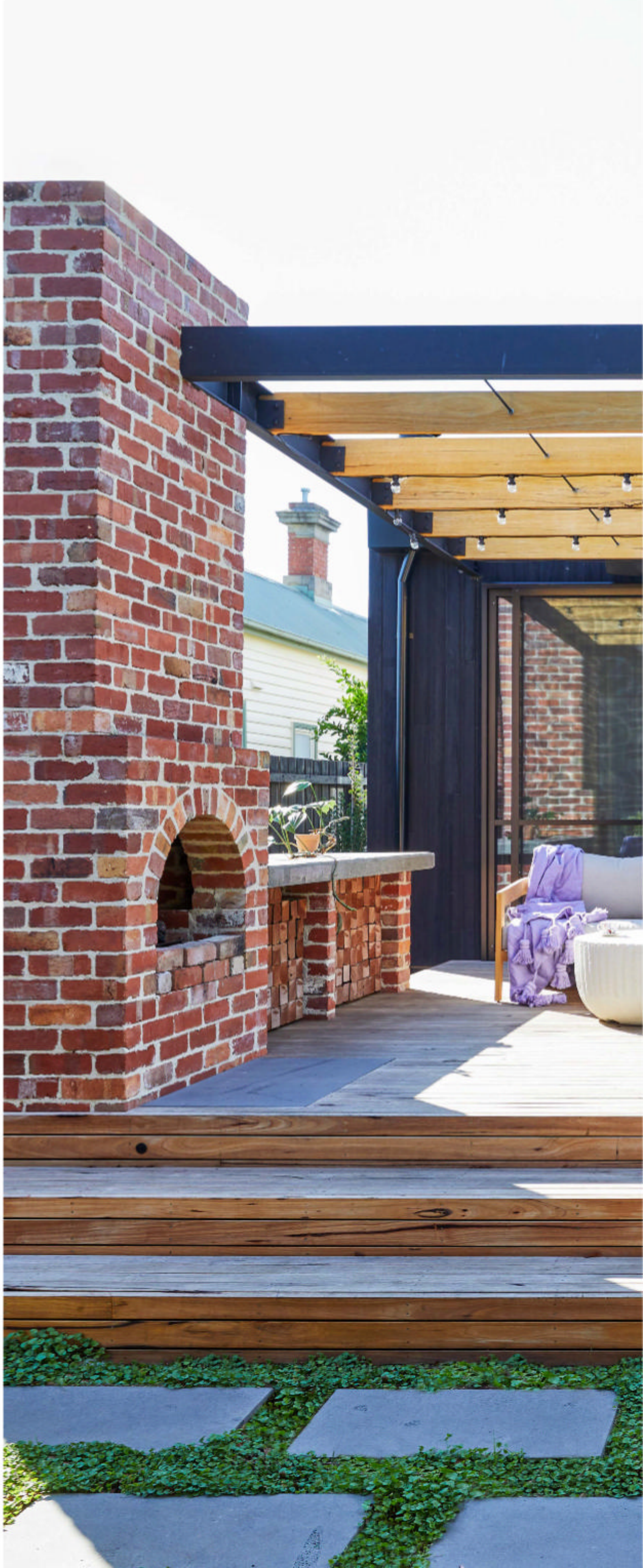
BATH
L'DRY
LIVING
KITCHEN
DINING
ALFRESCO
SHED
CAR SPACE

SOURCE BOOK

Interiors *Fleur Harris, fleurharris.com.* ***Builder*** *Bryce Dowling, bdbuildingdesign.com.au.* ***Landscape design*** *Ashley James Gardens, ashleyjamesgardens.com.*

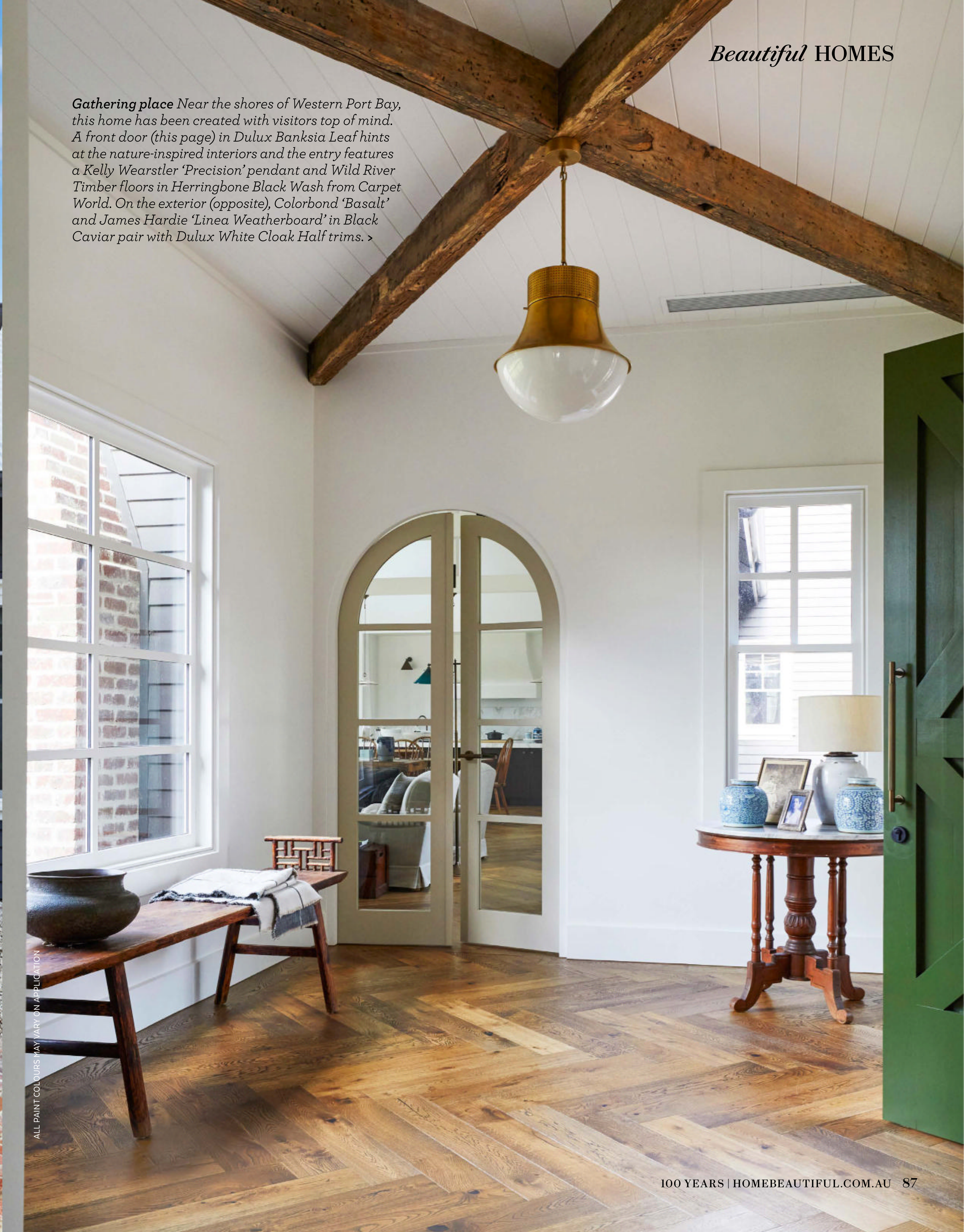
Alfresco *"Out the back, Ashley and I spoke more to the modern facade," explains Fleur. Dichondra is planted around the steppers while wisteria is starting to grow over the arbour. This provides partial cover for the alfresco living space, decorated with outdoor furniture from Freedom. The grand fireplace was another upcycling project for Fleur, made from salvaged bricks.*



Family ties

Firmly rooted to its serene setting, this family-oriented home in country-coastal Victoria seamlessly melds the outdoors and its stunning interiors

STORY **JACKIE BRYGEL** | PHOTOGRAPHY **ARMELLE HABIB**



Gathering place *Near the shores of Western Port Bay, this home has been created with visitors top of mind. A front door (this page) in Dulux Banksia Leaf hints at the nature-inspired interiors and the entry features a Kelly Wearstler 'Precision' pendant and Wild River Timber floors in Herringbone Black Wash from Carpet World. On the exterior (opposite), Colorbond 'Basalt' and James Hardie 'Linea Weatherboard' in Black Caviar pair with Dulux White Cloak Half trims.* >

ALL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

There are always visitors to this Mornington Peninsula home. Family and friends, of course, as well as a steady flow of rather persistent neighbours. "The property is bordered by pasture land, so we regularly have all these beautiful shaggy cows turning up at our fence line," says the homeowner, adding with a laugh, "You never feel lonely because they're always popping by! One of the wonderful things we're so grateful for is that, while we're only on a one-acre holding, we're surrounded by 100-acre-plus properties, which cannot be broken up. So we get to enjoy all the borrowed views without having to manage them."

The vista wasn't the only drawcard. "My husband grew up holidaying on this part of the Mornington Peninsula," says the owner. "The property used to be belong to his parents when there was a simple little cottage here. We purchased it from them 15 years ago, so it's an extremely sentimental place to us and we both feel very connected to it."

Parents to two adult children, the couple were living in Singapore in 2021 when they made the decision to return to Australia and their special corner of the world. "We initially thought about renovating the old cottage, but it just didn't make structural or financial sense," shares the owner. "Ultimately, it made much more sense to demolish and rebuild." With Rod Hannah Design drafting the architectural plans, the couple enlisted the expertise of Montique Construction for the 12-month build.

"We made the very happy decision to go with Joel Dempsey and Aaron Grover and their team at Montique," says the homeowner. "The best thing about the house is the experience we had building it. It meant that we moved into the house with such a positive energy and light spirit, which I know is not everyone's experience."

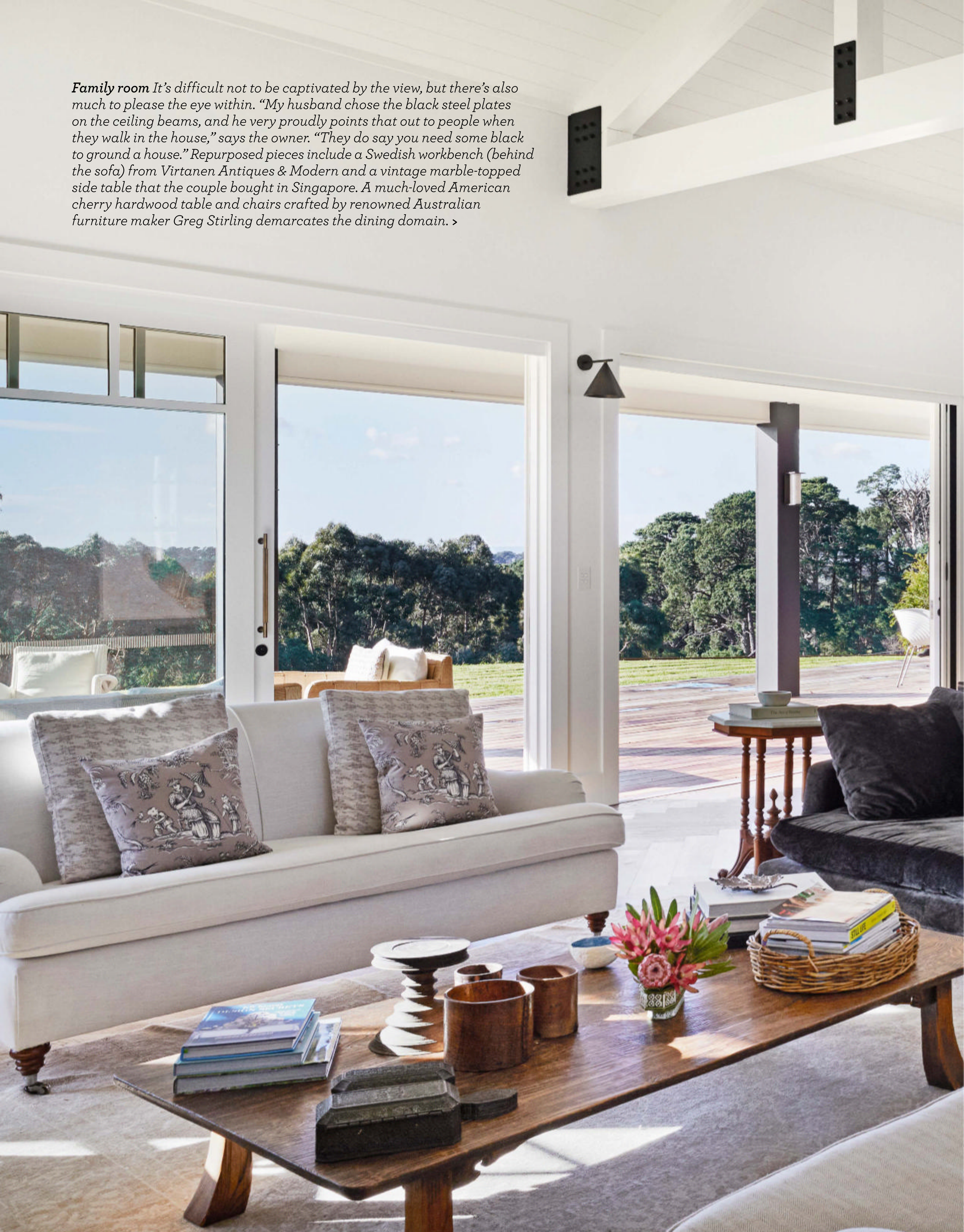
When it came to decorating – everything from the organic material base to the panelled joinery, the soft furnishings and flourishes of green – the owner discovered she was in her element. "I don't have any formal training in interiors, but I think if you have a real passion for something and spend a lot of time researching, it hones your ability to make decisions," she says. "There are thousands of decisions to make when you build a home, but the devil really is in the detail. This is definitely now our forever home." HB ***For more stunning homes, visit www.homebeautiful.com.au.***

***Living** "Ninety-five percent of the furniture in the home are items we already had," says the owner, "They all just seemed to work here." In this cosy relaxation zone (opposite), cherished pieces include a cane chair from the owner's grandfather's home, armchairs by late interior designer Stuart Rattle and the Kazari vintage Japanese coffee table. 'Saxon' chandelier by Currey & Company and ladder from Greg Stirling Furniture. >*

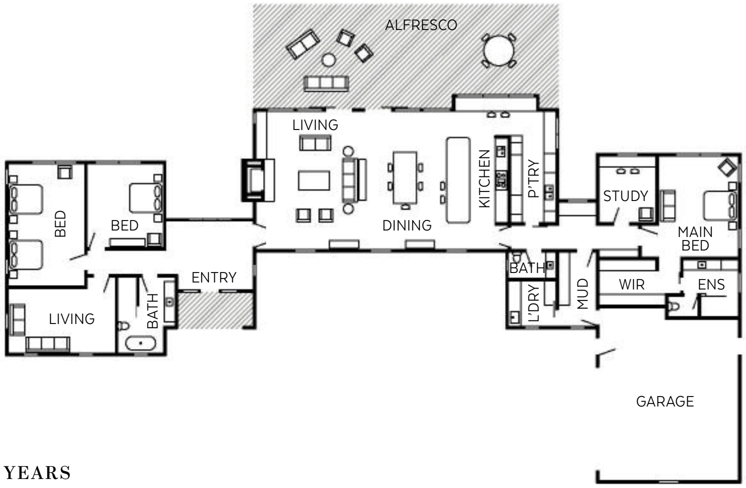
"We wanted to create a very layered home, not only from a soft furnishing point of view but also with some unique architectural details"

HOMEOWNER

Family room *It's difficult not to be captivated by the view, but there's also much to please the eye within. "My husband chose the black steel plates on the ceiling beams, and he very proudly points that out to people when they walk in the house," says the owner. "They do say you need some black to ground a house." Repurposed pieces include a Swedish workbench (behind the sofa) from Virtanen Antiques & Modern and a vintage marble-topped side table that the couple bought in Singapore. A much-loved American cherry hardwood table and chairs crafted by renowned Australian furniture maker Greg Stirling demarcates the dining domain.* >



FLOOR PLAN


ALFRESCO
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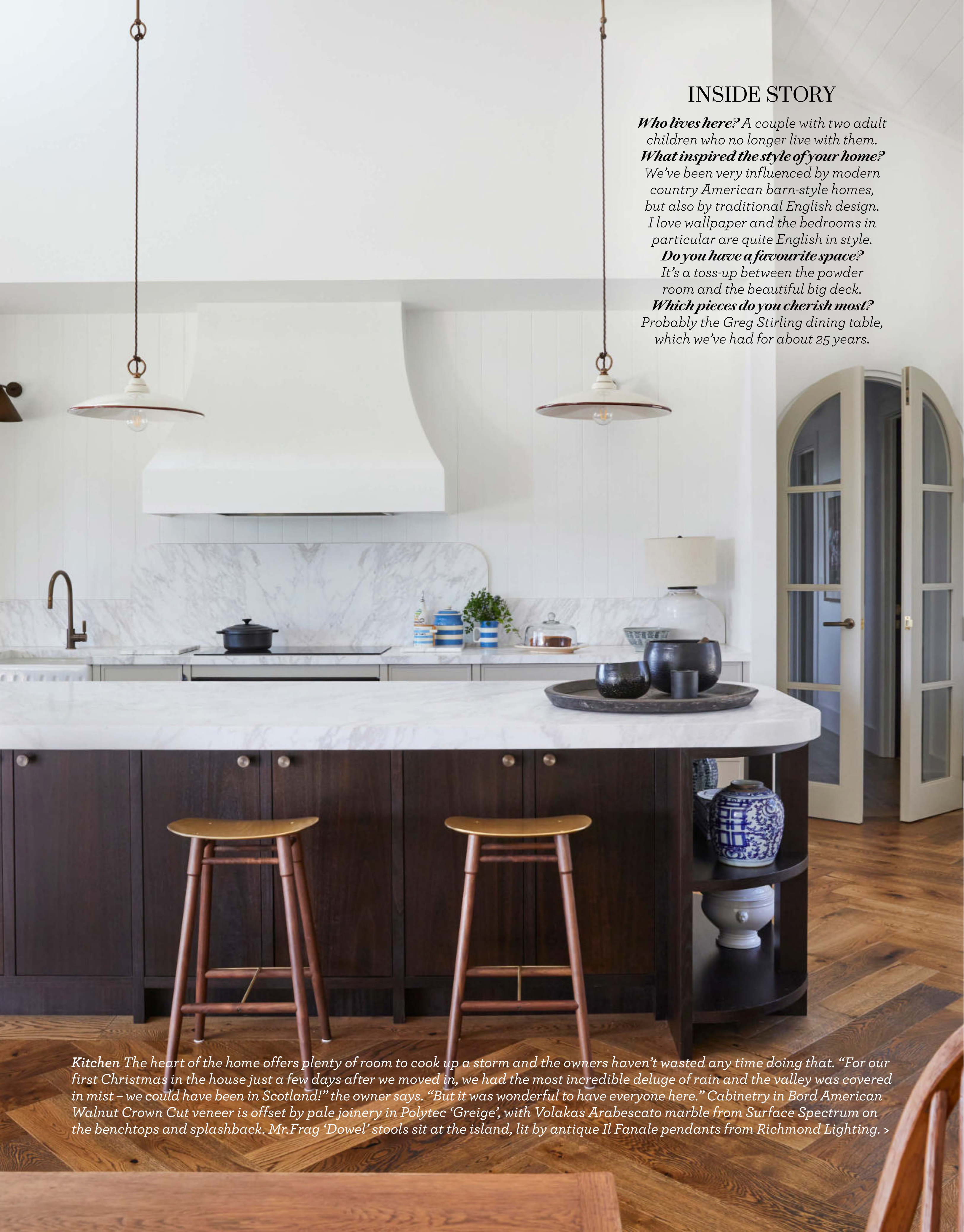
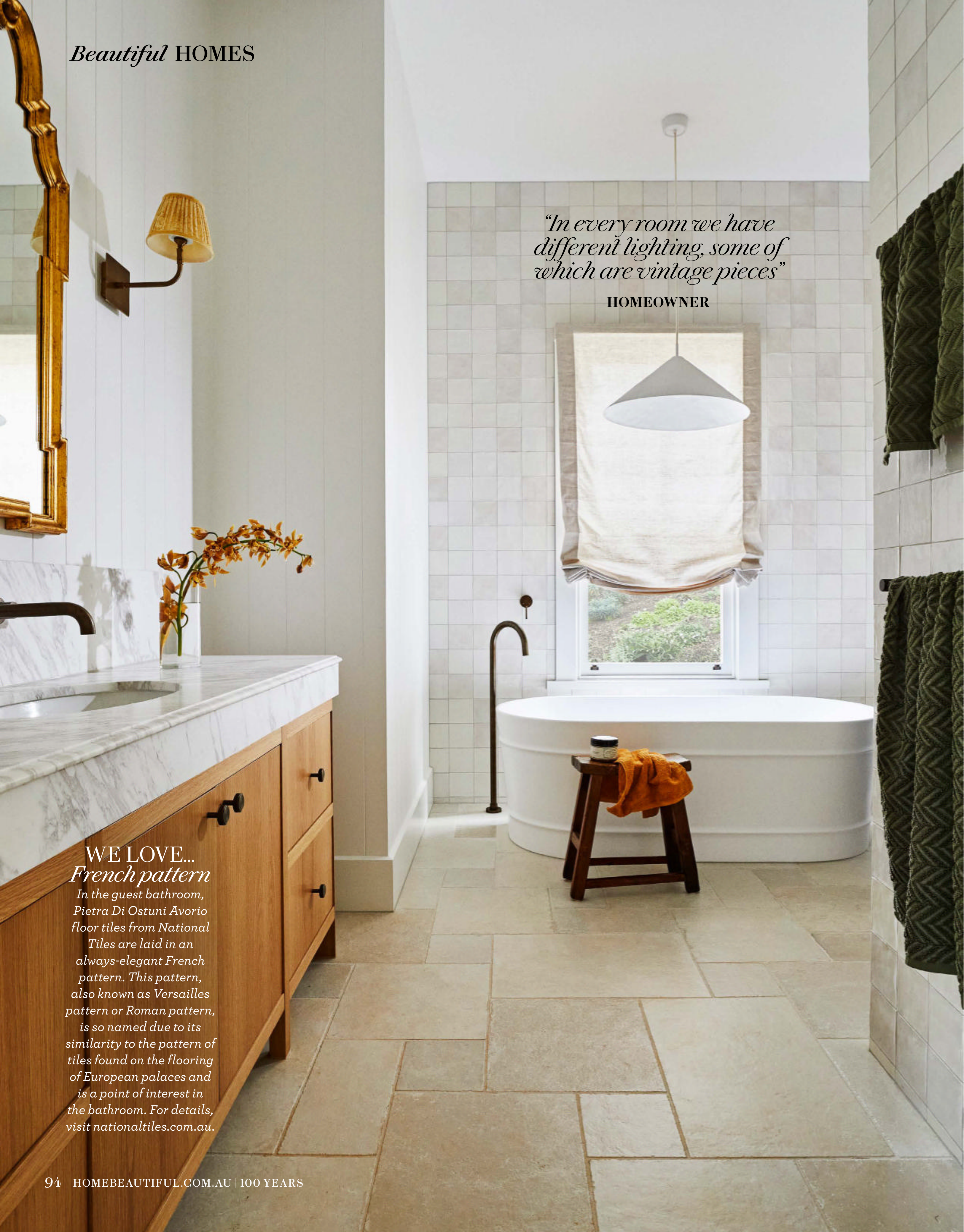


INSIDE STORY

Who lives here? *A couple with two adult children who no longer live with them.* ***What inspired the style of your home?*** *We've been very influenced by modern country American barn-style homes, but also by traditional English design. I love wallpaper and the bedrooms in particular are quite English in style.* ***Do you have a favourite space?*** *It's a toss-up between the powder room and the beautiful big deck.* ***Which pieces do you cherish most?*** *Probably the Greg Stirling dining table, which we've had for about 25 years.*

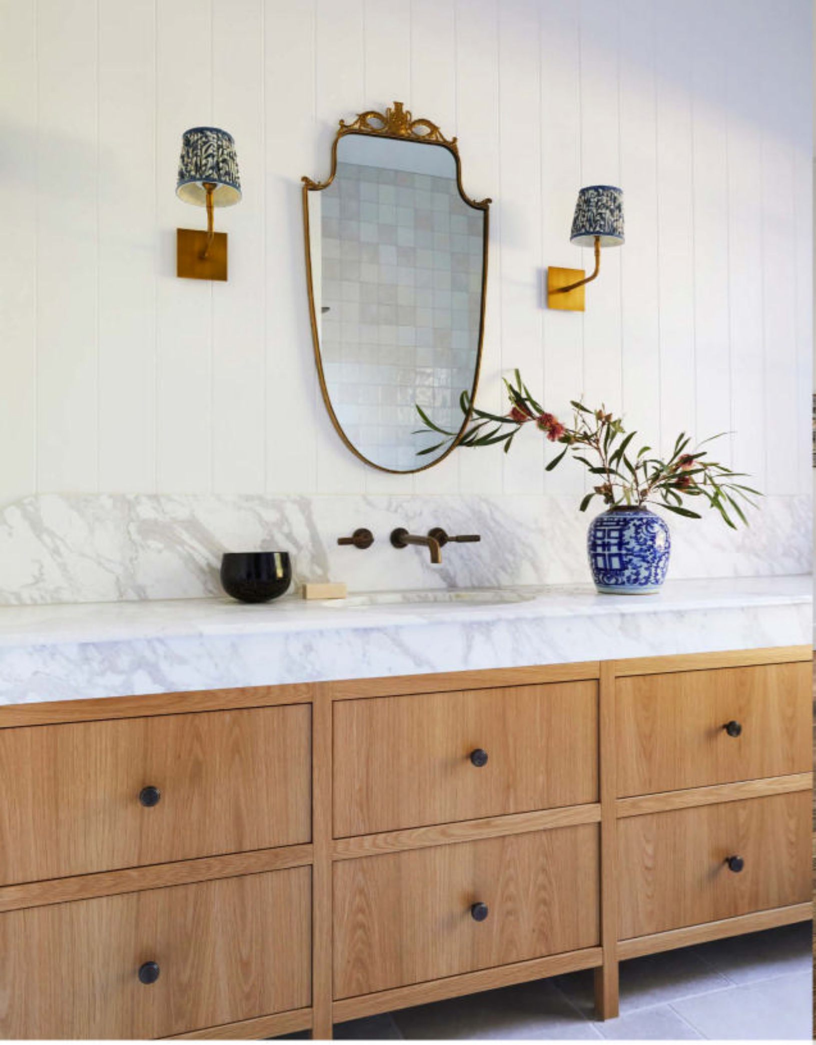
Kitchen *The heart of the home offers plenty of room to cook up a storm and the owners haven't wasted any time doing that. "For our first Christmas in the house just a few days after we moved in, we had the most incredible deluge of rain and the valley was covered in mist – we could have been in Scotland!" the owner says. "But it was wonderful to have everyone here." Cabinetry in Bord American Walnut Crown Cut veneer is offset by pale joinery in Polytec 'Greige', with Volakas Arabescato marble from Surface Spectrum on the benchtops and splashback. Mr.Frag 'Dowel' stools sit at the island, lit by antique Il Fanale pendants from Richmond Lighting.* >

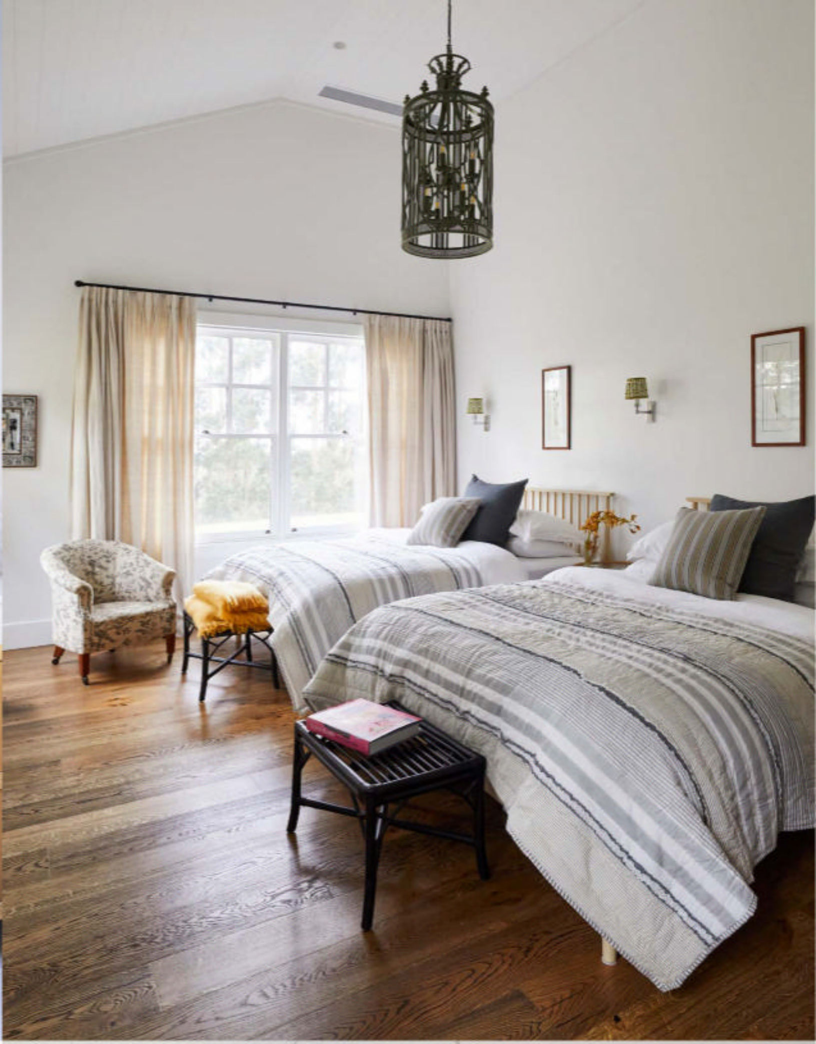


> *"In every room we have different lighting, some of which are vintage pieces"*
>
> **HOMEOWNER**

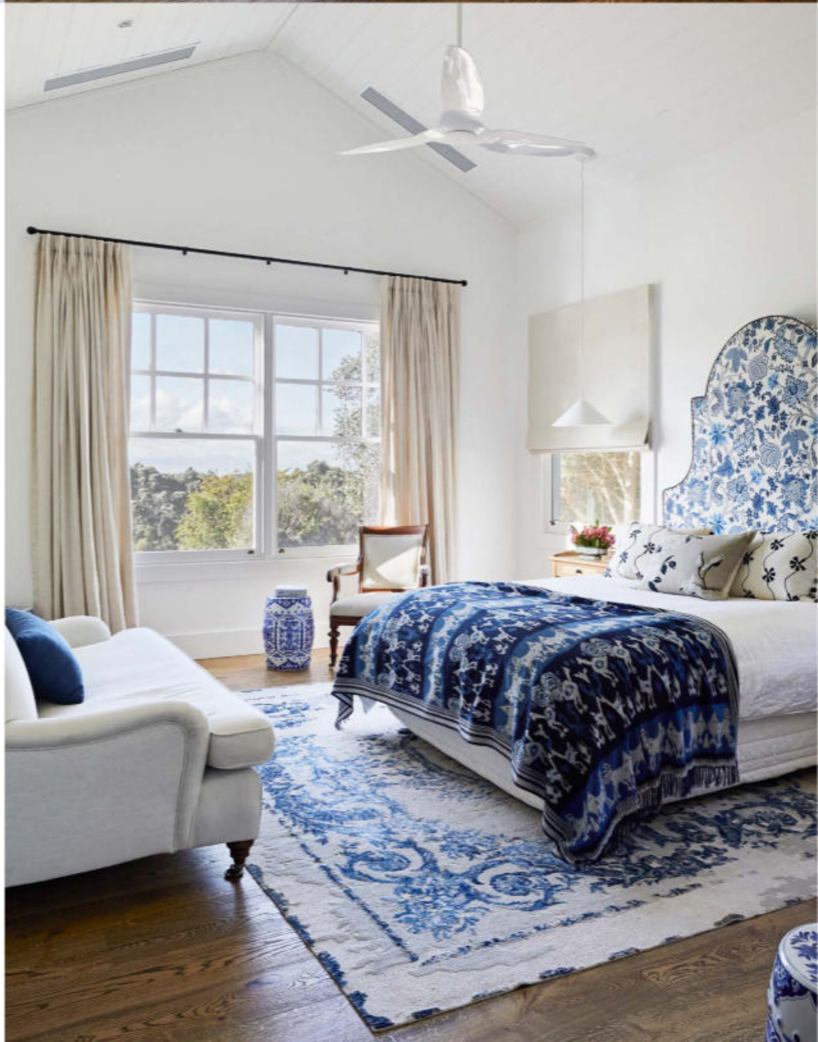
WE LOVE...
French pattern

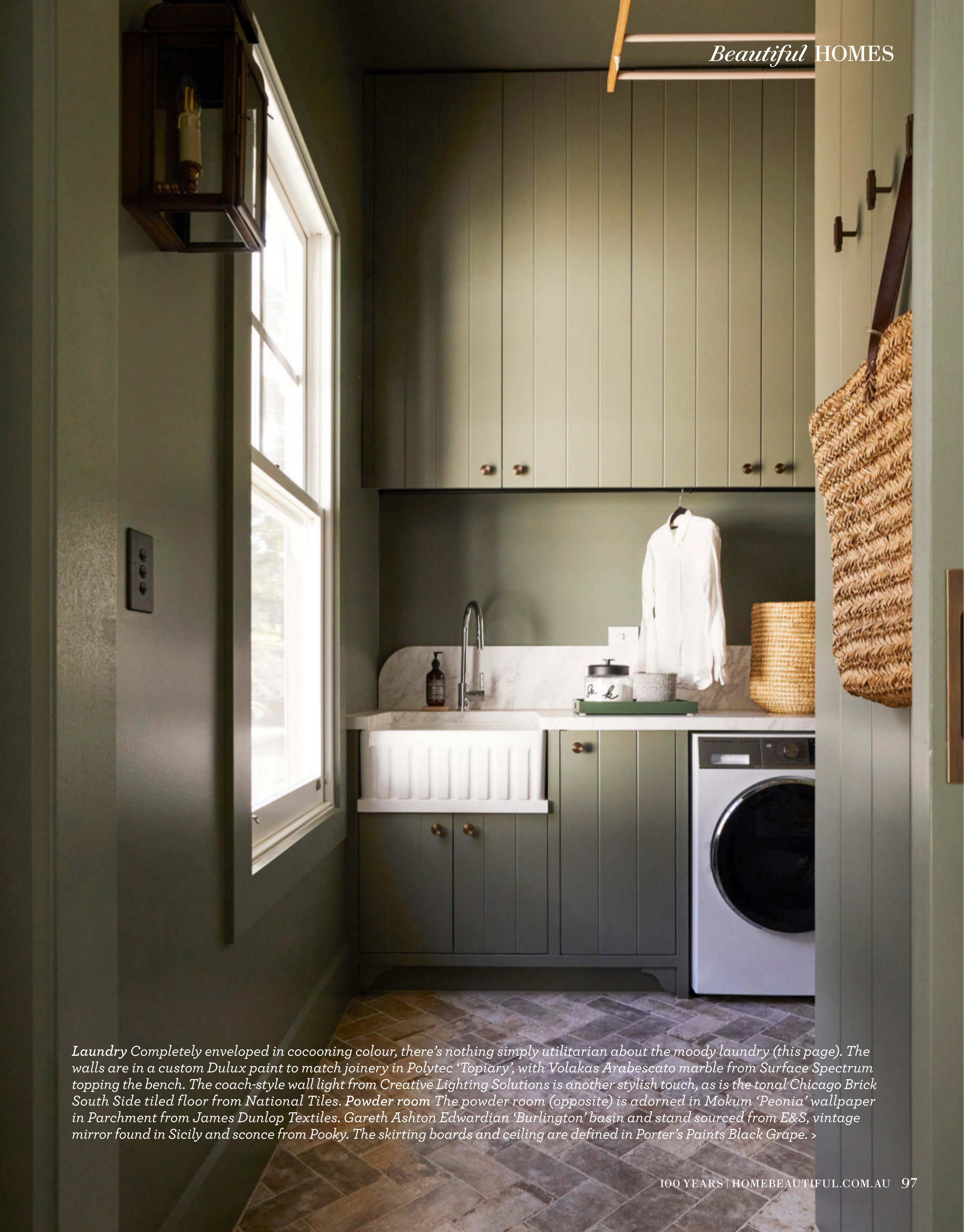
In the guest bathroom, Pietra Di Ostuni Avorio floor tiles from National Tiles are laid in an always-elegant French pattern. This pattern, also known as Versailles pattern or Roman pattern, is so named due to its similarity to the pattern of tiles found on the flooring of European palaces and is a point of interest in the bathroom. For details, visit nationaltiles.com.au.



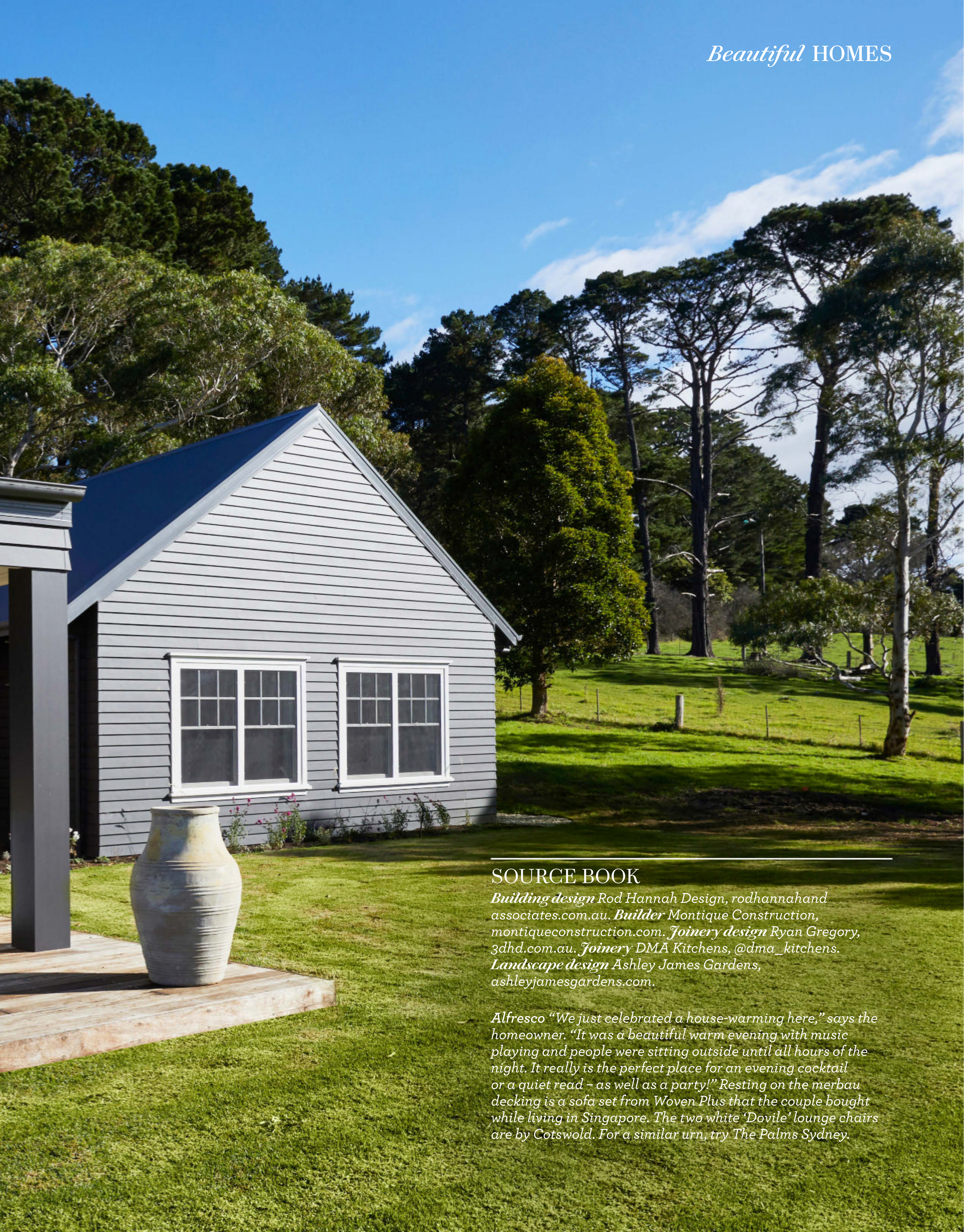


Main ensuite *A vintage Italian mirror is paired with Pooky wall lamps in the couple's bathroom (top left). Volakas Arabescato marble from Surface Spectrum tops the Bord American oak veneer vanity.* **Guest room** *Bedheads from Temple & Webster feature in a guest room (top right), while a large vintage armchair is upholstered in fabric from Westbury Textiles. Above it all hangs a vintage Spanish chandelier found on Facebook Marketplace.* **Main bedroom** *In the couple's retreat (bottom right), blue and white shine. A custom bedhead covered in Manuel Canovas 'Bagatelle' fabric marries with a Golran 'Grand Palais' rug, a vintage handmade Ikat throw and Designers Guild cushions. The antique chair under the window was bought from The Convent Gallery in Daylesford, Victoria "as an engagement present to my husband".* **Guest bathroom** *Under a pendant from MCM House, is an Attica 'Bondi' bath in the guest bathroom (opposite). Bath spout from Tile Cloud, vintage Italian mirror bought on Facebook Marketplace and sconces from Pooky.* **>**





Laundry *Completely enveloped in cocooning colour, there's nothing simply utilitarian about the moody laundry (this page). The walls are in a custom Dulux paint to match joinery in Polytec 'Topiary', with Volakas Arabescato marble from Surface Spectrum topping the bench. The coach-style wall light from Creative Lighting Solutions is another stylish touch, as is the tonal Chicago Brick South Side tiled floor from National Tiles.* ***Powder room*** *The powder room (opposite) is adorned in Mokum 'Peonia' wallpaper in Parchment from James Dunlop Textiles. Gareth Ashton Edwardian 'Burlington' basin and stand sourced from E&S, vintage mirror found in Sicily and sconce from Pooky. The skirting boards and ceiling are defined in Porter's Paints Black Grape. >*



SOURCE BOOK

Building design *Rod Hannah Design, rodhannahandassociates.com.au.* ***Builder*** *Montique Construction, montiqueconstruction.com.* ***Joinery design*** *Ryan Gregory, 3dhd.com.au.* ***Joinery*** *DMA Kitchens, @dma_kitchens.* ***Landscape design*** *Ashley James Gardens, ashleyjamesgardens.com.*

Alfresco "We just celebrated a house-warming here," says the homeowner. "It was a beautiful warm evening with music playing and people were sitting outside until all hours of the night. It really is the perfect place for an evening cocktail or a quiet read – as well as a party!" Resting on the merbau decking is a sofa set from Woven Plus that the couple bought while living in Singapore. The two white 'Dovile' lounge chairs are by Cotswold. For a similar urn, try The Palms Sydney.

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BEAUTIFUL DESIGN

KITCHENS | BATHROOMS | EXPERT ADVICE | RENOVATE | CREATE

PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN DOWNS

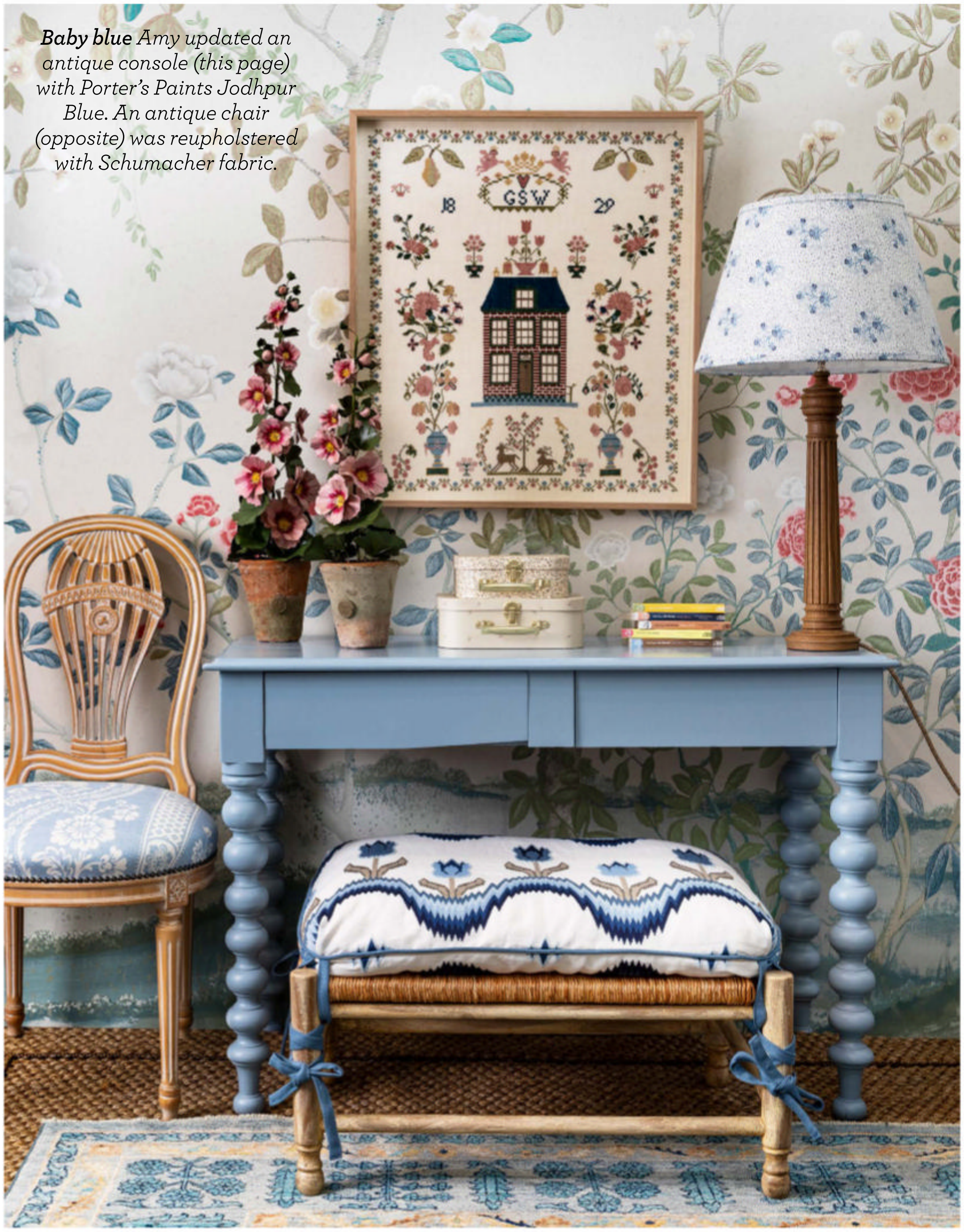
PURE IMAGINATION
PAGE 102 →

Bedroom masterclass

PURE IMAGINATION

Create a world of wonder for your children with these playful yet practical nurseries and bedrooms

STORY TAHN SCOON



Baby blue *Amy updated an antique console (this page) with Porter's Paints Jodhpur Blue. An antique chair (opposite) was reupholstered with Schumacher fabric.*

PHOTOGRAPHY MARTINA GEMMOLA ARTWORK ARTIST UNKNOWN

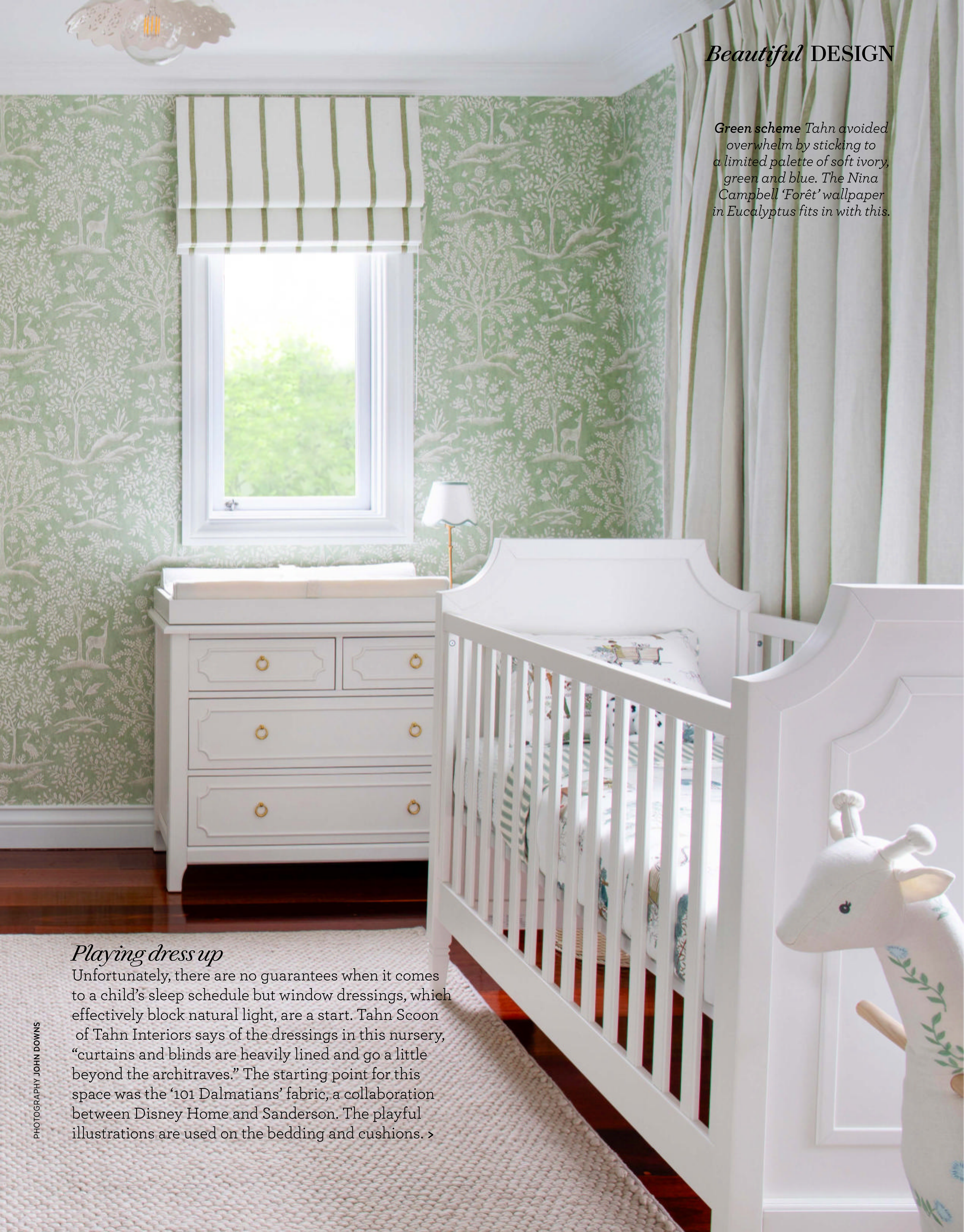
Decorating can be a delight, especially when it comes to children's bedrooms. Most little ones prefer colourful, creative spaces so it's an opportunity to truly let your imagination run free. Play with pattern, pick a lively palette and, for truly individualistic interiors, incorporate a few vintage pieces.

Of course, all children grow up and as such, one of the most important considerations is longevity. Consider decor that is easily adaptable as your child develops. Stripes and checks are perennial favourites, and a velvet bedhead can be updated with increasingly sophisticated linen. Most importantly, don't be afraid to embrace your inner child.

Old, new and blue

Children's furniture has to be hardy enough to withstand play. As such, Amy Spargo of Maine House Interiors used vintage pieces in her daughter's bedroom, including rugs. "They're well-constructed and have already been used, so you don't have to be too precious," she says. "Also, they lend a sophistication, preventing the room from becoming too babyish." Another clever inclusion is multi-purpose furniture. "We designed my daughter's bed to also function as a daybed, or a sofa," says Amy. The canopy is dowel wrapped in 'Elena Paisley Stripe' and topped in 'Piet Performance Linen', both from Schumacher. >

Gaston
MARIGOLD GARDEN

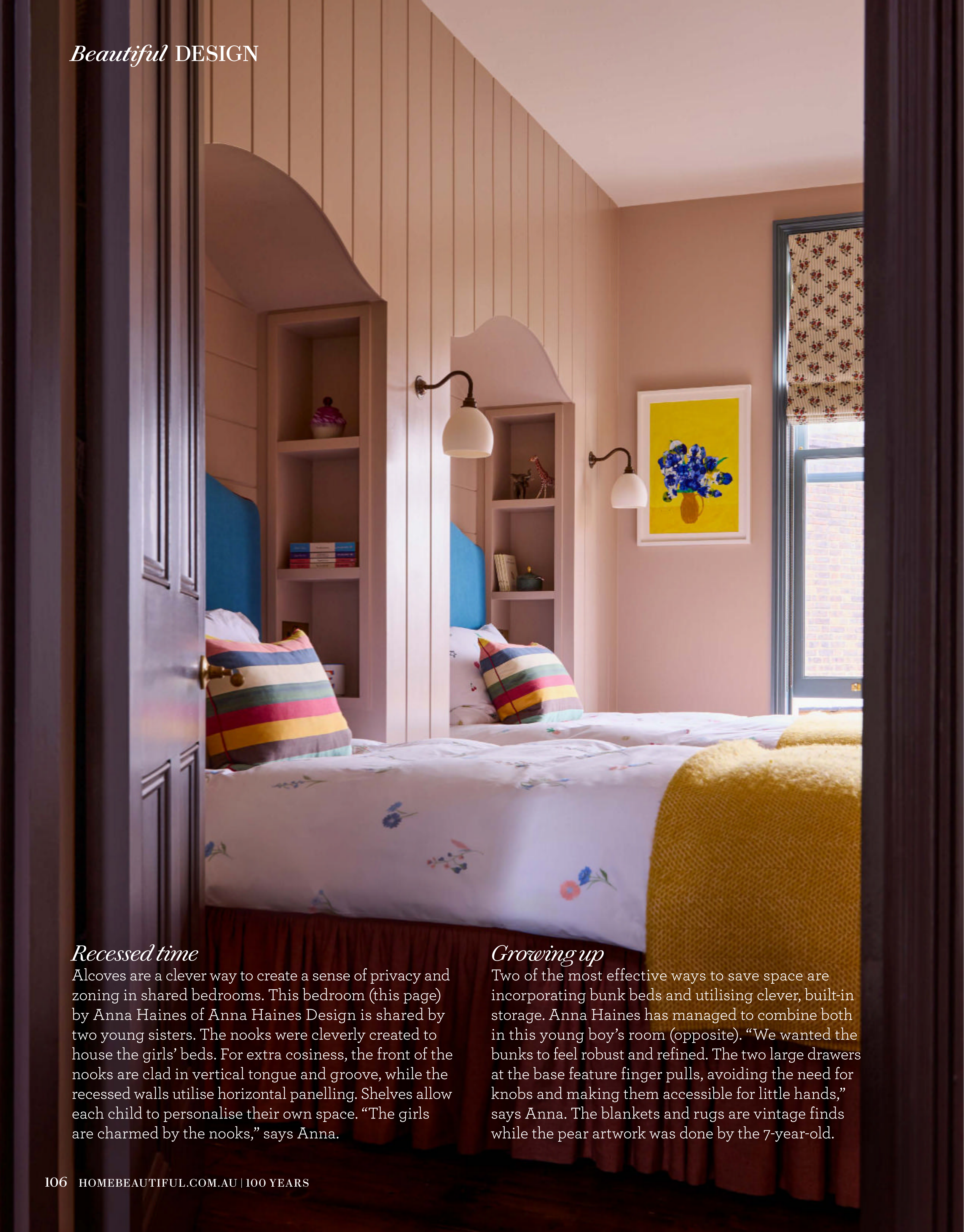


Green scheme *Tahn avoided overwhelm by sticking to a limited palette of soft ivory, green and blue. The Nina Campbell 'Forêt' wallpaper in Eucalyptus fits in with this.*

Playing dress up

Unfortunately, there are no guarantees when it comes to a child's sleep schedule but window dressings, which effectively block natural light, are a start. Tahn Scoon of Tahn Interiors says of the dressings in this nursery, "curtains and blinds are heavily lined and go a little beyond the architraves." The starting point for this space was the '101 Dalmatians' fabric, a collaboration between Disney Home and Sanderson. The playful illustrations are used on the bedding and cushions. >

PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN DOWNS

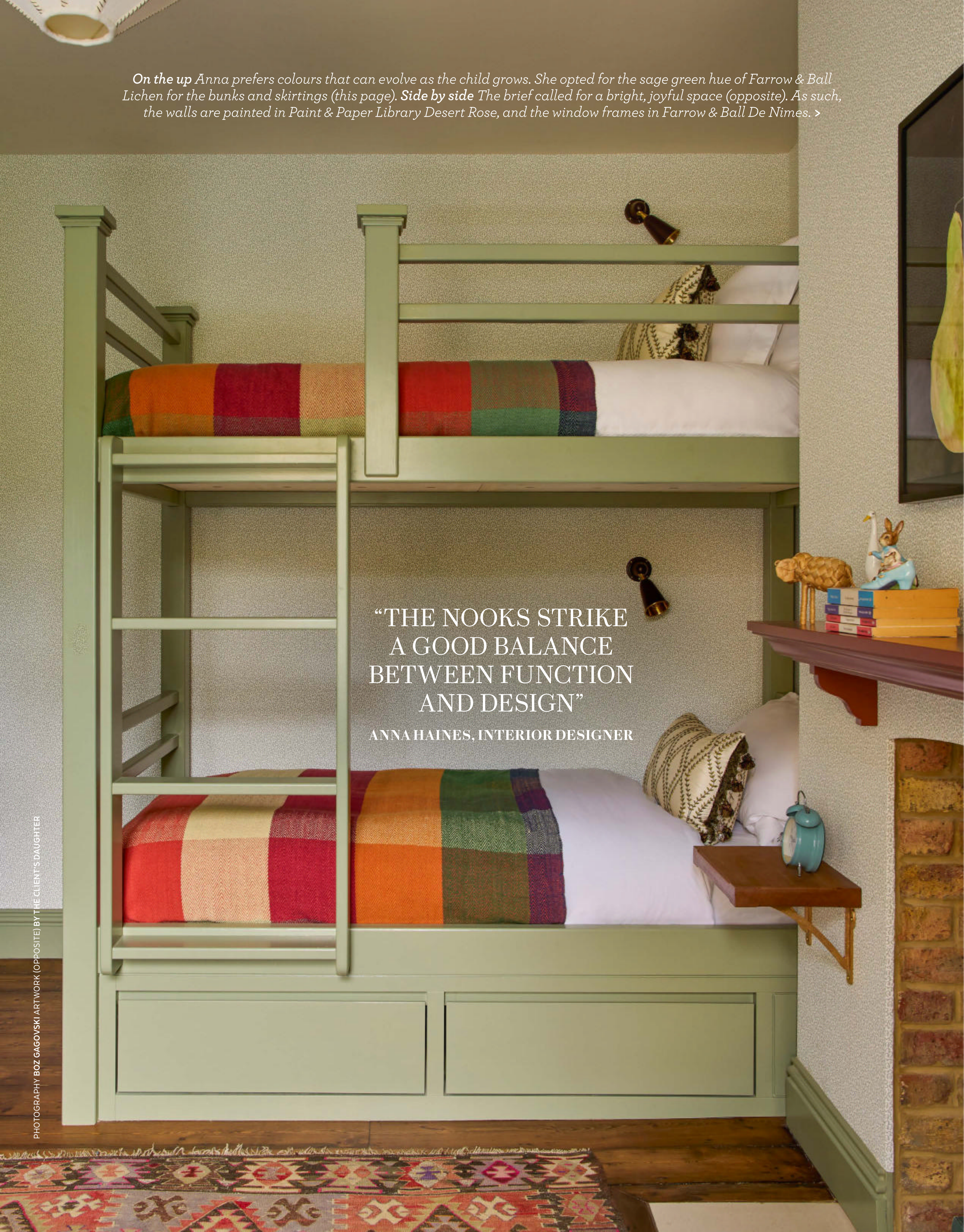


Recessed time

Alcoves are a clever way to create a sense of privacy and zoning in shared bedrooms. This bedroom (this page) by Anna Haines of Anna Haines Design is shared by two young sisters. The nooks were cleverly created to house the girls' beds. For extra cosiness, the front of the nooks are clad in vertical tongue and groove, while the recessed walls utilise horizontal panelling. Shelves allow each child to personalise their own space. "The girls are charmed by the nooks," says Anna.

Growing up

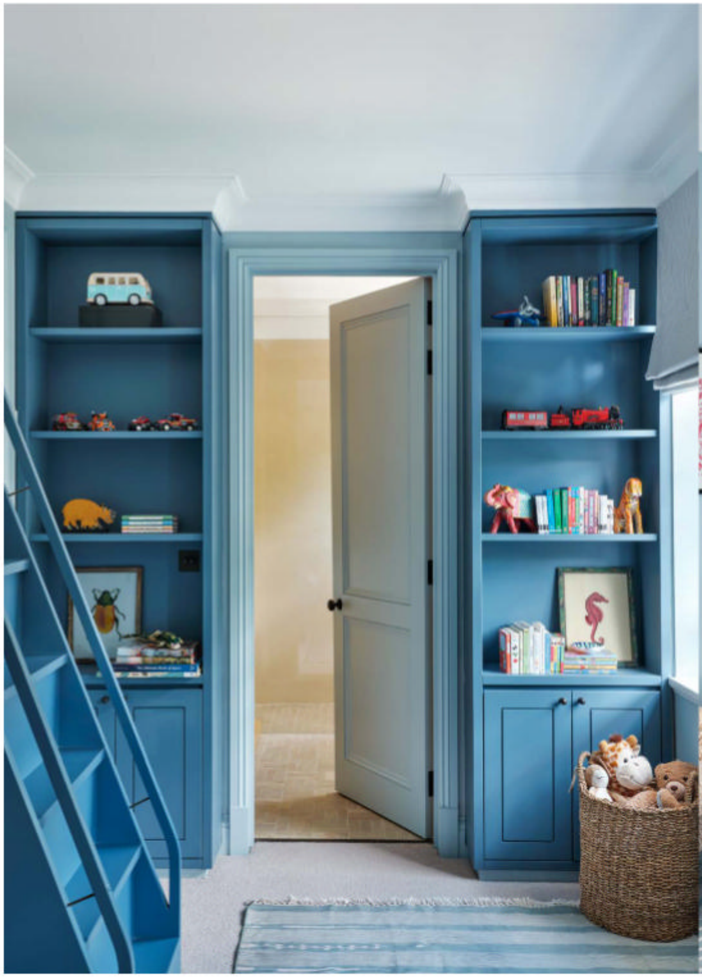
Two of the most effective ways to save space are incorporating bunk beds and utilising clever, built-in storage. Anna Haines has managed to combine both in this young boy's room (opposite). "We wanted the bunks to feel robust and refined. The two large drawers at the base feature finger pulls, avoiding the need for knobs and making them accessible for little hands," says Anna. The blankets and rugs are vintage finds while the pear artwork was done by the 7-year-old.

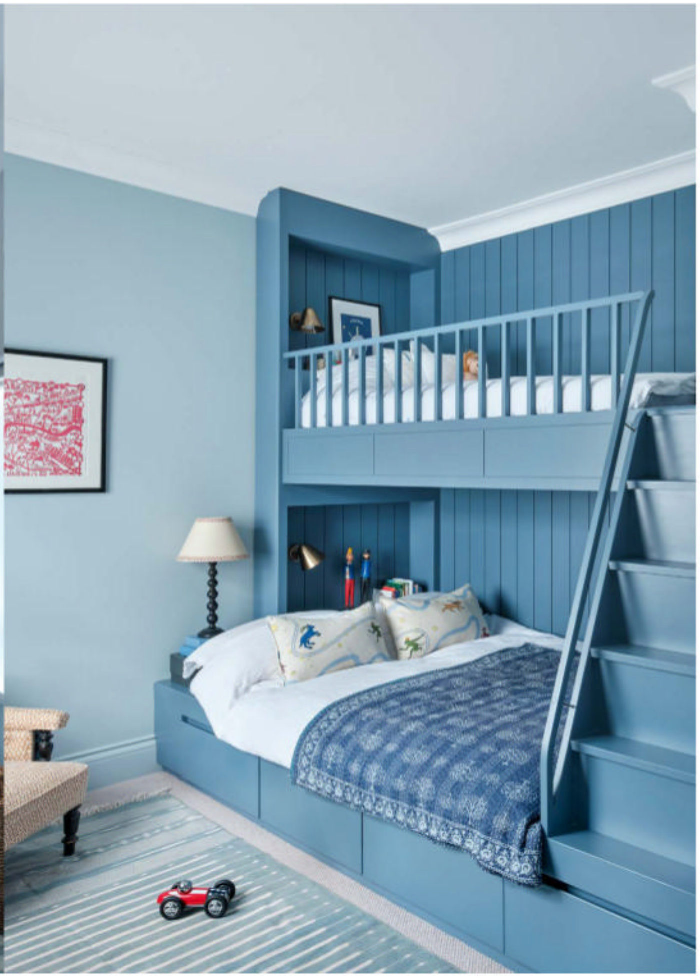


On the up *Anna prefers colours that can evolve as the child grows. She opted for the sage green hue of Farrow & Ball Lichen for the bunks and skirtings (this page).* ***Side by side*** *The brief called for a bright, joyful space (opposite). As such, the walls are painted in Paint & Paper Library Desert Rose, and the window frames in Farrow & Ball De Nimes.* >

> “THE NOOKS STRIKE A GOOD BALANCE BETWEEN FUNCTION AND DESIGN”
>
> **ANNA HAINES, INTERIOR DESIGNER**

PHOTOGRAPHY **BOZ GAGOVSKI** ARTWORK (OPPOSITE) **BY THE CLIENT'S DAUGHTER**





Play date

Sleepovers are often the highlight of a child's social calendar but it can be hard to create a room that caters to extra sleeping space without impeding daily function. In this bedroom (this page), Claire Sá, director of De Rosee Sa, used a single-over-double bunk configuration as it achieves this purpose without overcrowding. Stairs connect the bunks instead of a ladder. "The stairs offer greater safety for younger children," she shares, adding that the "ensuite provides a sense of comfort and independence."

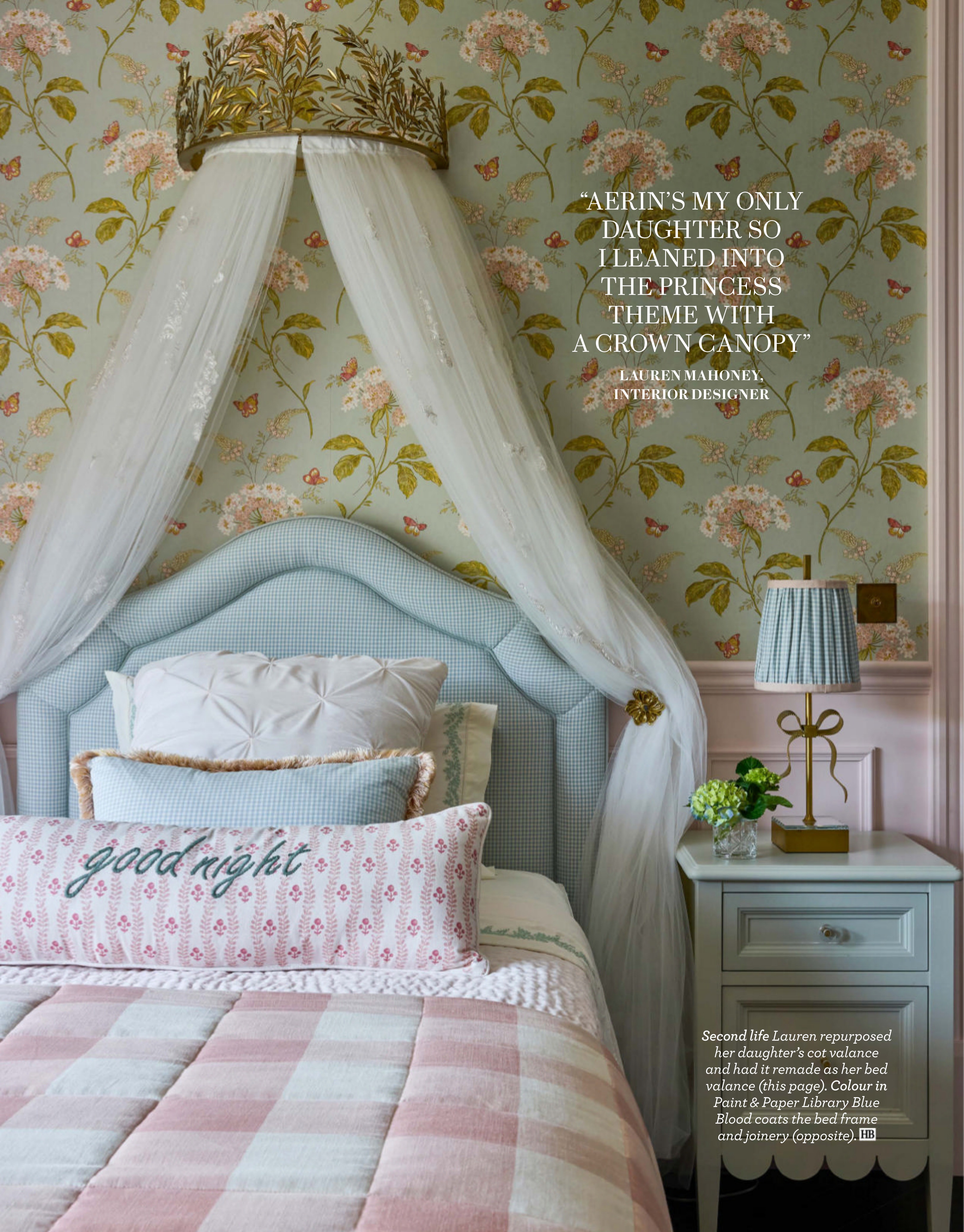
Crowning glory

Lauren Mahoney of Studio Trio gave her daughter the royal treatment with a crown canopy (opposite) from Pottery Barn Kids. While decorative, it had a practical purpose. "We have a heritage Federation home, and the ceilings are 3.2 metres high," says Lauren. "The canopy draws the eye up and helps fill the space." Jane Churchill 'Messina' wallpaper adorns the walls above wainscoting, finished in Resene Dust Storm. "Walls are often overlooked but they can really elevate your interiors," says Lauren.

SLUMBER ESSENTIALS

***From left** Sealy Singles 'Echo' mattress, $699/single, Harvey Norman. A.H. Beard 'Bunk Buddy' mattress, $499/single, Harvey Norman. 'Joey' kids mattress, $475/single, Koala. SleepMaker Elements 'Jordan' mattress in Medium Feel, $749/single, Harvey Norman. Sealy Singles 'York' mattress, $299/single, Domayne.*

PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE) **ASTRID TEMPLIER** (OPPOSITE) **PABLO VEIGA** STYLING (OPPOSITE) **JACK MILENKOVIC** ARTWORK (THIS PAGE) **ARTISTS UNKNOWN**



> “AERIN’S MY ONLY DAUGHTER SO I LEANED INTO THE PRINCESS THEME WITH A CROWN CANOPY”
>
> **LAUREN MAHONEY, INTERIOR DESIGNER**

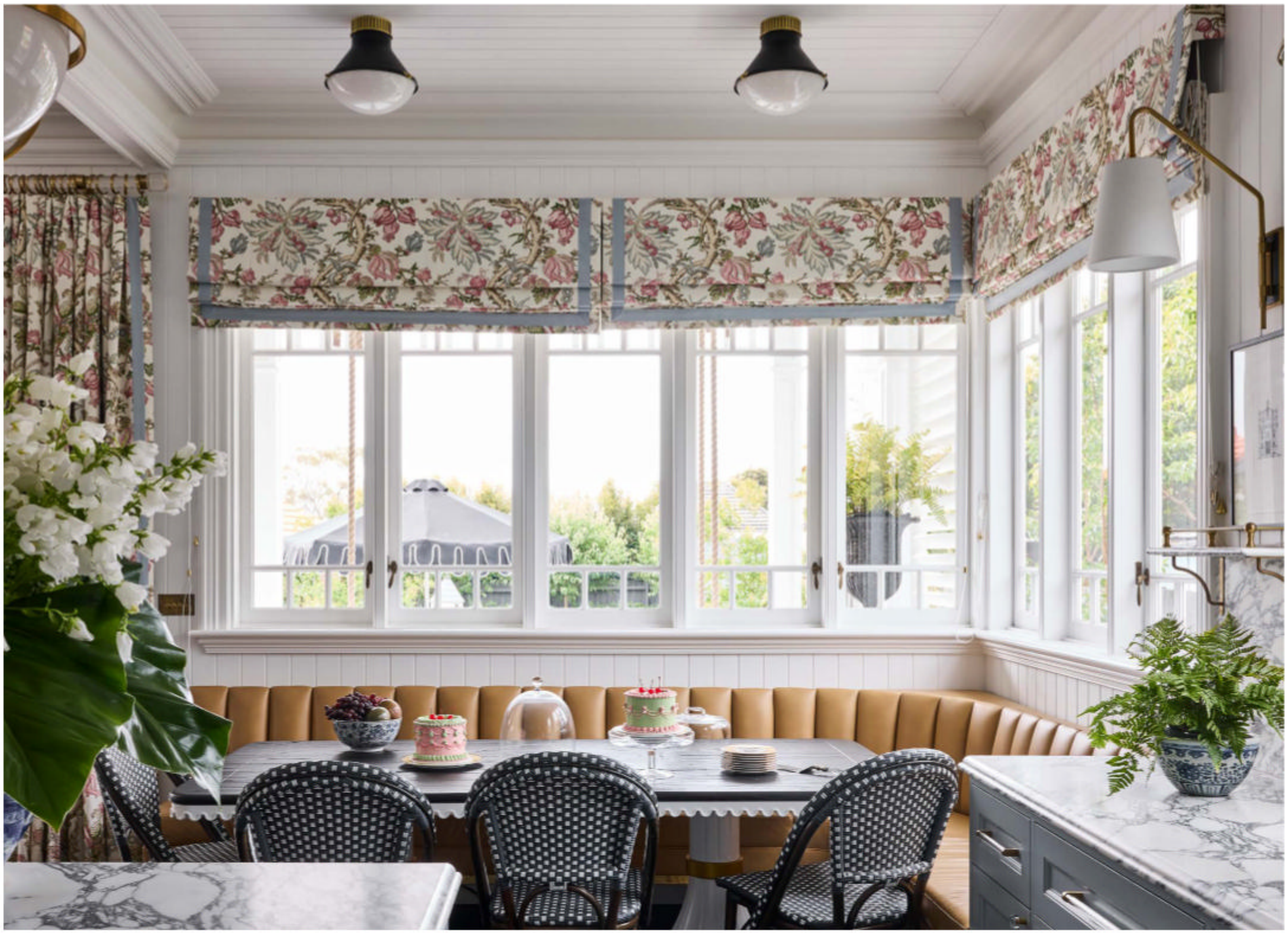
Second life Lauren repurposed her daughter’s cot valance and had it remade as her bed valance (this page). ***Colour in*** *Paint & Paper Library Blue Blood coats the bed frame and joinery (opposite).*

Kitchen seating

PLEASE *be* SEATED

Pull up a chair and read our ultimate guide to kitchen seating, from bar stools to built-in banquettes and more

WORDS BRITTANY SMITH



There's no denying that in recent years, the heart of the home has evolved to encompass far more than simply cooking. Modern kitchens are, more often than not, bustling hubs that require various seating options. "Everyone loves to gather in the kitchen, and considered seating accommodates the ebb and flow of everyday life," says Kate Nixon, founder and director of the eponymous design studio.

Depending on the layout of your kitchen, your scheme will likely need to incorporate different types of seating, from island stools to dining chairs and even built-in banquettes or freestanding benches. While style and material options are important, height, size and minimum clearances are just as essential. "Seating gets used frequently and energetically," explains Lorena Couto, interior designer at Progressive Plans. "Every movement – pulling, turning, sitting – needs to be accounted for in the layout." Read on for our expert advice.

Fixed form

Banquette seating perfectly blends form and function, creating stylish, informal dining while making use of corners that could otherwise feel awkward. "Banquettes are brilliant space savers," says Amanda Garcia-Panetta, interior designer and director of Studio Panetta. "Having the seat hard up against a wall gives circulation space back to the room." To ensure functionality and easy flow as people slide in and out of the banquette, the maximum length should be roughly 1850 millimetres – enough space to comfortably seat three people. A seat height of around 450 millimetres suits Australian standards. "The back will vary depending on the architectural elements behind it," says Amanda. For banquettes fitted beneath a window, she recommends a height of 320 millimetres for the backrest.

Leather lessons *A timeless yet hardy option is leather upholstery. Studio Trio's directors used Pelle Leathers 'Colorado Chintz' for the banquette in their home, paired with Cantina 'Barcelona' chairs from Lincoln Brooks (this page). Copperstone by The Range Estates (opposite) opted for Draga and Aurel 'Marilyn' leather dining chairs (try Space) and Jess Designs 'Sanne Swivel' leather bar stools.* >

PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE) **PABLO VEIGA** (OPPOSITE) **SEAN FENNESSY**
STYLING (THIS PAGE) **JACK MILENKOVIC** (OPPOSITE) **EMMA LANE** ARTWORK
(THIS PAGE) **'DARLING STREET' BY CATHERINE WATKINS**

> "WORK IN TIMBERS THAT ENHANCE THE SCHEME, RATHER THAN CONTRASTING AGAINST IT"
>
> **AMANDA GARCIA-PANETTA, INTERIOR DESIGNER**

PHOTOGRAPHY **LUKE BUTTERLY** STYLING **LORENA COUTO**

Tall order

Whether you're entertaining loved ones, helping children with homework or looking for a casual place to perch with a coffee, bar stools are an essential form of seating for kitchen islands. "In Australia, most kitchen islands are 900 millimetres high," explains Lorena. "If your island deviates from that height, choose stools with adjustable options to maintain ergonomic comfort. A minimum clearance of 300 millimetres should suffice for leg space." Kate has noticed recent trends towards bar stools that are decorative objects in their own right. "Sculptural forms with interesting back details, softening curves and tactile materials create a standalone statement," she explains. If you intend to use bar stools sparingly, then a minimal design, foregoing backrests and footrests, will suffice. However, comfort is key if you plan to settle in for longer. "A low back provides welcome support and a broader seat affords the comfort to linger longer," shares Kate.

The benchmark

Freestanding bench seats aren't the most common choice for kitchens, but they offer plenty of benefits. "A bench will seat more people than individual chairs, and they tuck away when not needed," says Amanda. In terms of shared seating, they also offer a flexibility that built-in options aren't able to provide, as well as a more budget-conscious approach. Jeremy Lee, furniture designer and maker of JD Lee Furniture, crafts his designs from solid timber due to its structural superiority. "Bench seating is a great way to add an aesthetic point of difference," he says. While backless designs can preserve uninterrupted sightlines in your kitchen and dining area, Jeremy warns that the absence of a backrest impacts ergonomics, which means people will feel uncomfortable quicker. When it comes to style, leather, rattan and timber are particularly popular for bench seats as they introduce warmth and texture, perfectly complementing relaxed interiors.

A new start *Progressive Plans sourced the dining chairs and bar stools in this kitchen from second-hand shops across NSW. They add character and feature tactile rattan elements for cohesion and consistency. The banquette seating was custom-built for the project, then decorated with cushions from Cabana Style.* **>**

Classic cut

With the rise in open-plan homes, dining chairs are now a common feature in kitchens, especially in casual dining nooks. For increased comfort, try a design that has arm supports and a backrest, whether this covers the entire back or a band around the middle. Like banquettes, standard Australian chairs typically have a seat height of 450 millimetres to suit a table height of 750 millimetres. If your chairs have armrests, then double check they're low enough to tuck underneath your dining table. While solid timber chairs are the most popular style that JD Lee Furniture makes, additional materials including Danish cord, rattan and upholstery all increase comfort and aesthetic appeal. "Added factors like being able to stack a dining chair or have removable components, which can be mended if necessary, add to the functionality and therefore the longevity of the piece," says Jeremy.

Soft touch

Upholstery is a wonderful way to introduce colour and pattern into interiors, while providing extra comfort for seating. With dining areas being such a high-traffic zone, durability and low maintenance are of utmost importance. Leather is a popular choice among all the experts we spoke to, as spills can be quickly rectified with a simple wipe. Performance fabrics present another great option, as they come pre-treated to ensure stain resistance and easy maintenance. Style-wise, they've come far in recent years. "Advances in modern day manufacturing are delivering softer, tactile options in a broadening range of tones, textures and patterns," says Kate. In her recent furniture collaboration with Boyd Blue, she noticed a shift towards cosier, comfortable pieces. "Families are more confident incorporating prints and patterns into everyday seating to soften these traditionally hard spaces," she says. Kate recommends outdoor poly inserts for seat cushions and a mix of fibre and feather for scatter cushion inserts.

Smooth surface *'The Block' design duo Kyal and Kara's built-in banquette is finished in Cemher 'Microdur' microcement (top left).* ***Careful craft*** *Interior decorator Simone Haag opted for 'Ruka' dining chairs by JD Lee Furniture (bottom left).* ***Diner chic*** *Two banquettes unite to create a delightfully retro booth (opposite).* HB

“REGARDLESS OF HOW WELL A CHAIR IS MADE OR HOW GOOD IT LOOKS, IF IT’S UNCOMFORTABLE IT WON’T LAST LONG”

JEREMY LEE, FURNITURE DESIGNER AND MAKER

PHOTOGRAPHY (TOP LEFT) **ALANA LANDSBERRY** (BOTTOM LEFT) **FIONA STOREY** (OPPOSITE) **MINDI COOKE**
STYLING (TOP LEFT) **LUCY GOUGH** (OPPOSITE) **TAHN SCOON** ARTWORK (THIS PAGE) **‘BLUE BIRD OF PARADISE’**
PRINT BY WILLIAM T COOPER (OPPOSITE BOTTOM) **MARK DAVIS**

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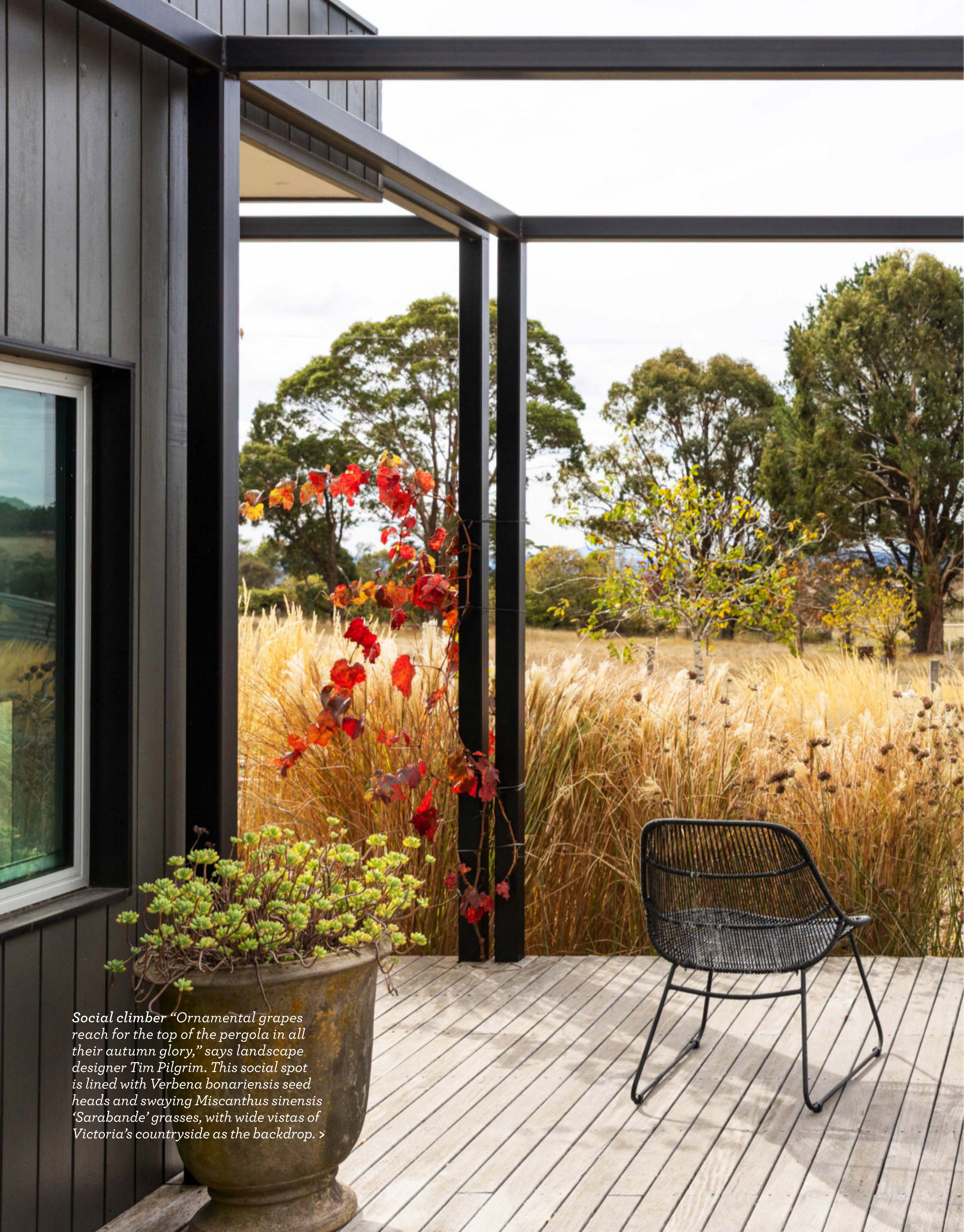
BEAUTIFUL GARDENS

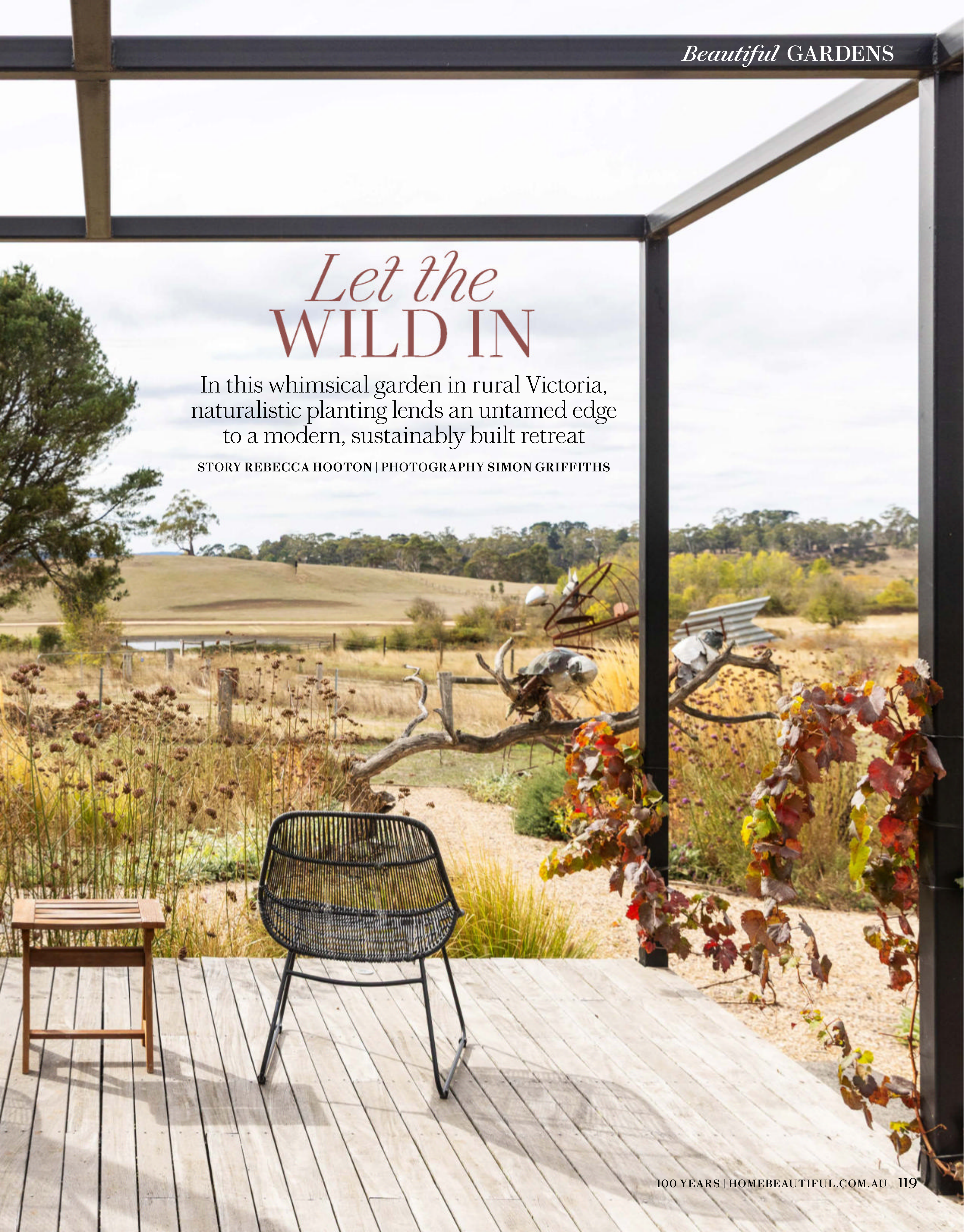
IDEAS AND INSPIRATION FOR STYLISH OUTDOOR LIVING

PHOTOGRAPHY SIMON GRIFFITHS

LET THE WILD IN
PAGE 118



Social climber *"Ornamental grapes reach for the top of the pergola in all their autumn glory," says landscape designer Tim Pilgrim. This social spot is lined with Verbena bonariensis seed heads and swaying Miscanthus sinensis 'Sarabande' grasses, with wide vistas of Victoria's countryside as the backdrop. >*



Let the
WILD IN

In this whimsical garden in rural Victoria, naturalistic planting lends an untamed edge to a modern, sustainably built retreat

STORY REBECCA HOOTON | PHOTOGRAPHY SIMON GRIFFITHS

When lawyer Ganga Narayanan first stood on the deck of her newly built Modscape home in Glenlyon, she was met with a breathtaking panorama – rolling hills, open fields and the distant curve of Victoria's Mount Franklin. But while the interior of her home was a showcase of warmth and sustainable innovation, the exterior remained stark. "The view of the countryside from the house is beautiful," says Ganga. "However, the house needed some outside spaces to relax in… It needed some complexity and layering."

That's when a chance Instagram scroll led her to landscape designer Tim Pilgrim. "A photographer I know posted photos of one of Tim's gardens and I started following him – I really liked his style," says Ganga. "I love the free-flowing natural look of his gardens. While there is plenty of structure, you have the feeling that the garden is a bit wild and seamlessly blends into the surrounding landscape."

From their first conversation, it was clear that this wouldn't be a typical garden makeover. Ganga, who spends time at the house intermittently, needed a drought-tolerant landscape that would sit lightly in its environment while offering a sense of richness and refuge. With a few visual references and plenty of trust, she handed creative control to Tim. "I showed Tim some pictures from Pinterest, pointed out a couple of his past gardens I liked, and let him go from there," she explains. "Most decisions were left to Tim."

It was installed in the winter of 2021 – in what would turn out to be the wettest season recorded in the Central Highlands.

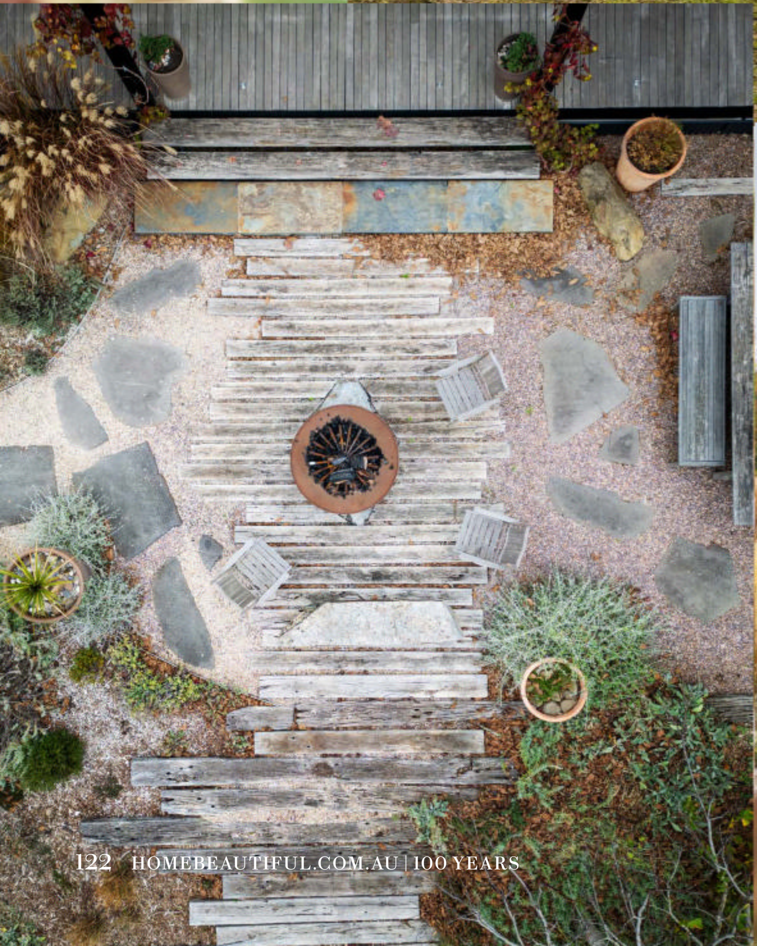
"WE USED THE RURAL OUTLOOK AS INSPIRATION FOR THE NATURALISTIC, GRASS-DOMINATED PLANTINGS"

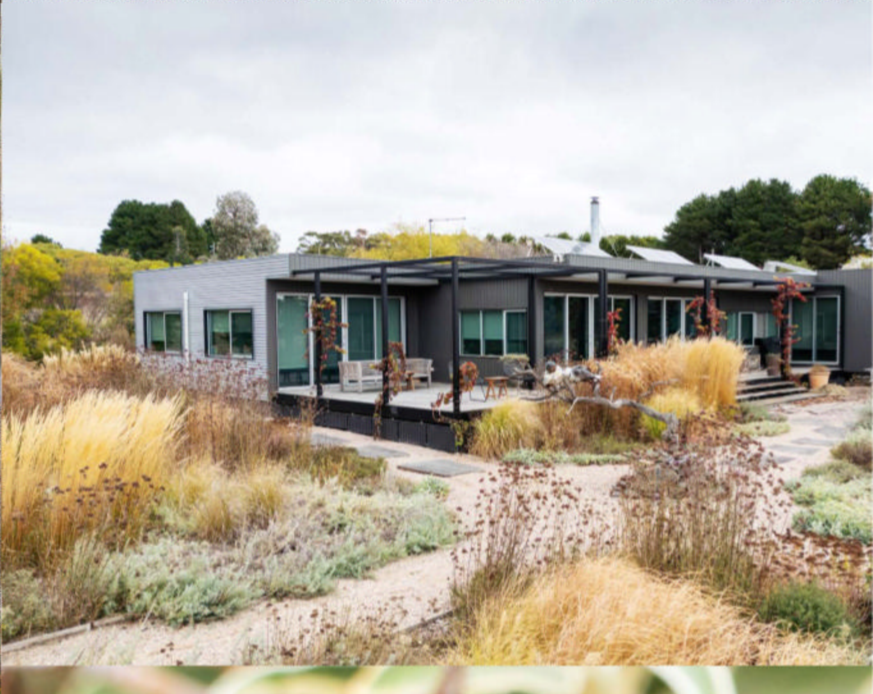
TIM PILGRIM, LANDSCAPE DESIGNER

Sow the seed *Verbena bonariensis seed heads dot the landscape (this page).* ***Light my fire*** *Tall grasses border the fire pit (opposite). "The straw colour of grasses highlights the dark seed heads of Veronicastrum virginicum and Verbena bonariensis," says Tim.* >

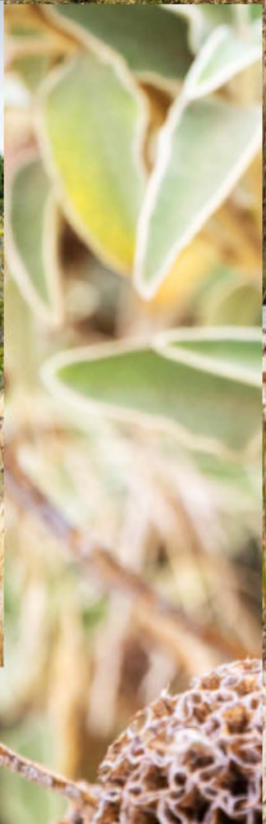
“WHEN YOU HAVE A VIEW LIKE THAT, YOU WANT TO ENHANCE IT, NOT TAKE AWAY FROM IT”

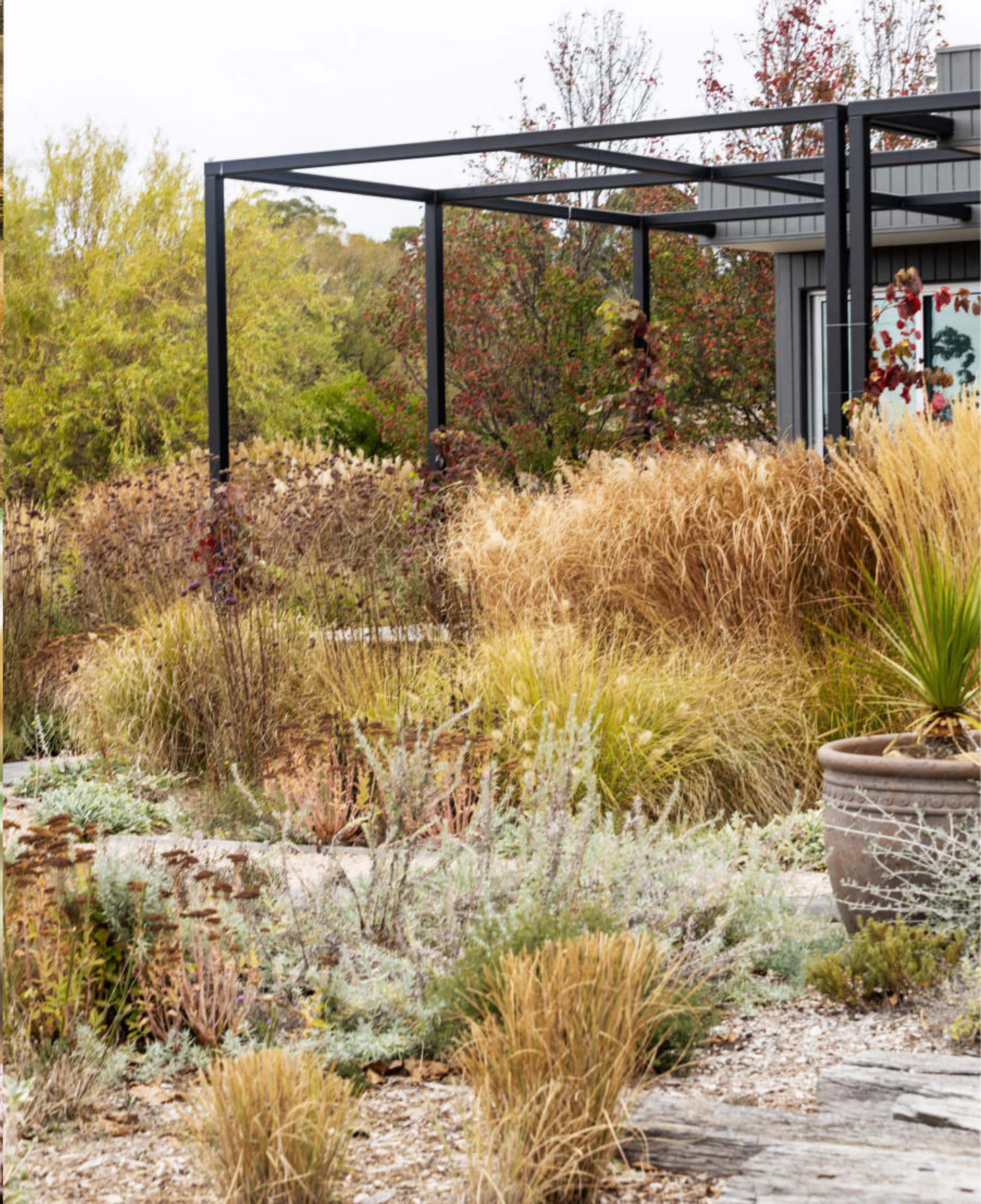
TIM PILGRIM, LANDSCAPE DESIGNER





Four seasons *Phlomis fruticosa seed heads are striking in winter (top right).* ***Natural embrace*** *Pennisetum alopecuroides, Calamagrostis x acutiflora 'Karl Foerster' and Miscanthus sinensis 'Sarabande' grasses form a russet backdrop for Artemisia ludoviciana and Sedum 'Autumn Joy' (bottom right).* ***Beaten track*** *The long driveway meanders through the landscape (opposite, top).* ***All aboard*** *Railway sleepers and basalt steppers are set into the Tuscan topping around the fire pit (opposite, bottom left).* ***Home at last*** *The aptly-named Omaroo (opposite, bottom right).* **>**





So the garden's journey began with mud and weeds. "It got off to a rocky start. We were planting into water, essentially," recalls Tim. "It nearly drowned before it grew!" agrees Ganga. Around 30 per cent of the plants were lost that year, while the weeds somehow thrived. "With so many garden beds, it was a lot of work to keep under control," she says.

But the vision was strong: one of naturalistic grace, movement and seasonal beauty. "We picked some colours from the landscape and the shapes of surrounding tree lines, and brought that into the design using topiary forms and block plantings of herbaceous perennials," says Tim. "We tried to aim for three flowering or focal points at any time through the year, and we celebrate dry seed heads, autumn colour and decaying textures into winter. It's about working with the wind and the light, letting things move and glow."

Central to the scheme are ornamental grasses – chosen not just for their drought hardiness but for their movement and visual poetry. "I love the wild grasses in front of the deck," shares Ganga. "They sway back and forth with the wind and give you the feeling that the garden is truly alive."

Nestled on a dead-end road and surrounded by paddocks, the home once stood isolated. Now, with the garden embracing borrowed views and echoing the forms of the broader landscape, it feels anchored – like it has always belonged. "You get these amazing sunrises and a beautiful play of light in the evenings," says Tim. "The view of Mount Franklin from the main deck is just unbeatable… When you have a long view like that, you want to treat the site well."

Fittingly, the property is called Omaroo – an Indigenous word meaning 'beautiful view'. And as Ganga now spends more time outdoors, sitting by the fire pit or watching the wind ripple through the grasses, it's clear that the name couldn't be more apt. "It's continuing to develop and mature, and it's constantly changing," she says. "I absolutely love it."

Winter waltz *Feathery plumes of Miscanthus seed heads dance in the cold wind (this page).* ***Opposite, 1.*** *Tim used an existing weathered urn planter as a permanent feature in the landscape.* ***2.*** *The gravel garden and railway sleepers give way to the home's corrugated rear entrance.* ***3.*** *"The paddocks and garden turn at the same time and provide a connection to the wider landscape from the house," says Tim of the plants' cool-weather colours.* ***4.*** *Teucrium fruticans adds silvery structure year-round.* ***5.*** *Vitis glows ruby red in autumn before shedding its leaves in winter.* ***6.*** *The sculptural, sword-shaped leaves and spines of Agave americana contrast with Westringia fruticosa.* ***7.*** *Tim found a laser-cut Corten steel sheet on site and repurposed it as a frame to support the grapevine.* ***8.*** *Tim's naturalistic planting style complements weathered structures on the property, such as the "haunted house-looking shed on the west boundary".*

SOURCE BOOK

Landscape design & construction Tim Pilgrim Gardens, tpgardens.com.au.

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> “I TRY TO REUSE AND REPURPOSE WHAT’S ON SITE INSTEAD OF BRINGING ANYTHING NEW IN”
>
> **TIM PILGRIM, LANDSCAPE DESIGNER**

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PEACH & SOUR CREAM CAKE
See page 133

PHOTOGRAPHY ROCHELLE EAGLE

BAKER'S DELIGHT
PAGE 128
→

MISS TRIXIE'S
HONEY JOY SLICE
See below

Baker's delight

Relish time-honoured treats with delicious dishes from *The Baker's Book*, a newly curated collection of nostalgic recipes by bakers, for bakers

RECIPES RUBY GOSS | STYLING LEE BLAYLOCK | PHOTOGRAPHY ROCHELLE EAGLE

Miss Trixie's Honey Joy Slice by Alice Bennett

MAKES 16

Cookie dough base
250g unsalted butter, softened
225g brown sugar
150g caster sugar
Generous pinch of sea salt flakes
2 eggs, at room temperature
450g plain flour
5g bicarbonate of soda

Honey joy top
215g unsalted butter
250g caster sugar
75g honey
145g cornflakes
10g sea salt flakes

1 Line your 22cm square brownie tin with baking paper. Be sure to bring the paper up the sides of the tin with a slight overhang. This will make getting your slice out of the tin a breeze.
2 For the cookie dough base, using a stand mixer with the paddle attachment, beat your butter, sugars and salt on medium speed until pale and creamy, about 4 minutes. Add the eggs and beat until well combined. Using a wooden spoon, mix your flour and bicarbonate of soda through until combined.
3 Press your dough into the prepared tin and freeze for a minimum of 3 hours (I like to freeze mine overnight).
4 Preheat your oven to 160°C (140°C fan-forced).
5 Bake the base for 25 minutes or until the edges are starting to turn slightly golden. Leave the dough in the tin to cool slightly. You'll notice that your base will rise and then collapse again – this is completely normal.
6 Make the honey joy top while the base is baking. Melt your butter with your sugar and honey in a medium saucepan over medium heat until the mixture starts to bubble and turn golden. Take the pan off the heat, add your cornflakes and sea salt, then gently fold through (taking care not to break your cornflakes).
7 Pop the cornflake mixture on top of your cooked dough base and return to the oven for a further 15 minutes. You want your cornflakes to have turned a luscious golden colour.
8 Cool in the tin for 30 minutes before taking out and slicing into squares or bars. >

BASQUE
CHEESECAKE
See page 130

Pear frangipane slab tart by Sophie Hansen

SERVES 4–6

Pastry
300g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
Pinch of salt
40g (⅓ cup) icing sugar
225g chilled unsalted butter, finely diced
60ml (¼ cup) chilled water

Frangipane
240g (1½ cups) raw almonds, freshly toasted
160g butter, softened
110g (½ cup) caster sugar
2 eggs
2 tablespoons plain flour
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Pinch of salt

Poached pears
1 litre (4 cups) cold water
440g (2 cups) caster sugar, plus 3 tablespoons extra for dusting
2 cinnamon sticks
1 teaspoon vanilla paste
4 beurré bosc pears (or other firm pears), peeled, halved and cored

Egg wash
1 egg
1 tablespoon pouring cream
Cream or vanilla ice cream, to serve (optional)

1 For the pastry, combine the flour, salt and icing sugar on a clean work surface. Bring into a small mound and make a well in the centre. Fill this with the butter and a splash of the chilled water. Use the heel of your hands to bring the mixture together, working the butter into the flour, adding more water as needed. Keep working until you have a rough dough. Shape into a disc, cover with biodegradable plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes. You could also make the pastry in a food processor.
2 For the frangipane, blitz almonds in a food processor to a coarse crumb. Add the remaining ingredients and blitz to a lovely paste. Refrigerate until ready to assemble.
3 Preheat oven to 220°C (200°C fan-forced). Line a baking tray with baking paper and dust work surface with flour.
4 For the poached pears, combine the water, sugar, cinnamon and vanilla in a large saucepan over medium–high heat. Bring to the boil, then reduce to a simmer. Add the pears, cover with a circle of baking paper (to prevent discolouration), then poach for 10–15 minutes or until the pears are tender. Leave to cool in the saucepan.
5 To assemble, using a rolling pin, roll out your chilled pastry dough to a 30cm × 25cm rectangle about 3mm thick. Carefully transfer the dough to your prepared baking tray.
6 Spread the base of your pastry with the frangipane mix, leaving a 4–5cm border all around – the frangipane layer should be about 1½ cm thick. Top the frangipane with the drained pear halves, gently removing the stalks if they are still attached. Now bring the pastry edges in, pinching and folding them together at each corner.
7 For the egg wash, mix the egg and cream and use a pastry brush to brush the mixture over the pastry edges. Sprinkle pears with the extra caster sugar and bake for 30 minutes or until the pastry is golden. Serve warm or at room temperature, with cream or ice cream.

Basque cheesecake by Darren Purchese

SERVES 8

165g egg (from about 3 large eggs)
450g cream cheese, softened and diced
140g caster sugar
110g mascarpone cheese, at room temperature
65ml whipping cream
1 vanilla bean, split lengthways and seeds scraped
Salt, to taste
15g plain flour

1 Pour the egg into a blender and blend on medium speed for 30 seconds. Gradually add the cream cheese and blend again for about a minute. Scrape down the side of the blender with a spatula and mix again for 30 seconds or until smooth. Add the sugar and mix again for 1 minute. Scrape down the side and add the mascarpone, cream, vanilla seeds and salt. Mix again until light and smooth. Finally, add the flour and mix again for 1 minute.
2 Lightly spray an 18cm-diameter springform tin with canola spray and push a 30cm x 30cm sheet of baking paper into the ring (scrunch the paper into a ball first). Push to the edges – you want the paper crinkled, not neat. Lightly spray the inside of the paper with canola spray.
3 Pour the cheesecake mixture into the prepared tin, then refrigerate for 30 minutes.
4 Preheat oven to 220°C (200°C fan-forced). Place cake in the oven and immediately reduce the temperature to 210°C (190°C fan-forced). Bake for 50 minutes.
5 Cool in the tin for 40 minutes. The cheesecake will drop as it cools, creating a dip in the surface.
6 Refrigerate for 1 hour, then remove from the tin by releasing the spring and lifting off the ring. Gently pull the paper away from the sides of the cheesecake, being careful not to damage the cake. Lay a large plate over the cheesecake, then invert it and hold the cake in one hand while releasing the base of the tin with the other. Gently remove the entire sheet of paper from the cheesecake and then lay a serving plate on the base of the cake. In one motion, invert the cake once more and remove the first plate. The cheesecake is ready to serve.
7 To cut, use a sharp non-serrated knife dipped in hot water. Dry the blade with a clean cloth before cutting, and clean, reheat and dry the blade before each cut. Serve each slice on its own, or with lemon curd, fruit compote and pouring cream.

TIP I personally love the cheesecake in all of its stages, but it's best on the day of baking with limited refrigeration. The cheesecake will last up to four days in the fridge, becoming denser as the days progress. Wrap cheesecake in foil rather than plastic wrap for storage in the fridge. >

PEAR FRANGIPANE
SLAB TART
See opposite

HUON APPLE
CRUMBLE
See opposite

Peach and sour cream cake by Alisha Henderson

SERVES 8–12

Cake

- 200g salted butter, softened and diced
- 280g (1¼ cups) light brown sugar
- 300g (2 cups) self-raising flour
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 125g (½ cup) sour cream
- 825g tinned sliced peaches, drained and roughly chopped

Crème diplomat

- 48g cornflour
- 115g caster sugar
- 135g egg yolk (from about 7 eggs)
- Seeds of 1 vanilla pod, split and scraped, or 1 tbsp vanilla bean paste
- Pinch of salt
- 550ml milk
- 30g unsalted butter
- 350ml whipping cream

1 Preheat the oven to 190°C (170°C fan-forced). Line the base of a 20cm springform tin with baking paper and grease the ring.

2 For the cake, in a food processor, combine the butter, 165g (¾ cup) of the sugar, the flour, bicarbonate of soda and half the cinnamon. Blitz for about 30 seconds, until combined and crumbly in texture. Add the eggs and sour cream, and pulse for 15 seconds, until all the ingredients are combined. Using a spoon, stir in the peaches until evenly distributed through the batter.

3 Spoon mixture into the cake tin and smooth the top. Mix together the remaining sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over the top (add a little more brown sugar if you wish).

4 Bake for about 45 minutes or until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean. Cool in the tin for 15 minutes, then remove and leave on a wire rack to cool completely.

5 For the crème diplomat, mix cornflour, sugar, egg yolk, vanilla seeds and salt in a large mixing bowl.

6 Heat milk in a medium saucepan over low heat until scalded – it's done once you see steam and tiny bubbles. Remove from the heat and, whisking constantly, pour milk over the egg mixture to temper it. Pour combined mixture back into the saucepan and place over medium-low heat. Whisk constantly for about 5 minutes, until it bubbles and thickens, showing signs of sticking to the bottom. Take care not to overcook it or you will scramble the mixture (if you have a thermometer, it's ready when it reaches 82°C).

7 Place a sieve over the mixing bowl and strain the custard through it. Stir in the butter until combined. Cover with biodegradable plastic wrap, with the wrap directly touching the surface, and refrigerate overnight or for at least 2 hours.

8 Before serving, whip the cream using a stand mixer with the whisk attachment until medium-stiff peaks form. Fold whipped cream into the custard mixture – this is your crème diplomat ready for serving.

Huon apple crumble by Jessie Knierum and Aaron Morgan

SERVES 4–6

Crumble

- 200g plain flour
- 75g rolled (porridge) oats
- 75g chopped nuts (almonds, walnuts or hazelnuts)
- 175g caster sugar
- 7g ground cinnamon
- 5g ground ginger
- Pinch of salt
- 200g cold diced butter

Apple filling

- 8 apples (ruby golds, fujis or granny smiths work best)
- 100g caster sugar
- Finely grated zest and juice of 1 lemon, or a splash of apple cider vinegar
- 7g ground cinnamon
- 5g ground ginger
- 20g unsalted butter

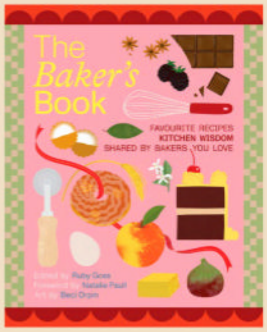
1 For the crumble, mix all the dry ingredients in a stand mixer with the paddle attachment until combined. Slowly, add the butter on low speed, then continue to mix until the mixture has a coarse sandy texture (any more and it will turn into cookie dough).

2 Preheat the oven to 175°C (155°C fan-forced).

3 For the apple filling, peel, core and roughly dice half the apples. Place in a wide ovenproof frying pan with the sugar and lemon zest and juice, and cook over medium heat for about 5 minutes. Meanwhile, peel, core and roughly chop the remaining apples and slowly add to the pan. Stirring regularly to ensure they don't stick to the bottom, cook for a further 5 minutes (this technique will result in a mixture of contrasting textures).

4 Add spices and butter and stir until the butter is melted.

5 Cover apples with the crumble and bake for 45 minutes or until the crumble is nice and golden or the filling is bubbling up and out.



SWEET TOOTH

This is an edited extract from 'The Baker's Book' edited by Ruby Goss, with photography by Rochelle Eagle and illustrations by Beci Orpin, published by Murdoch Books, $45.

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WES ANDERSON
THE GARDEN

PHOTOGRAPHY **BROCK B**

BEFORE + AFTER

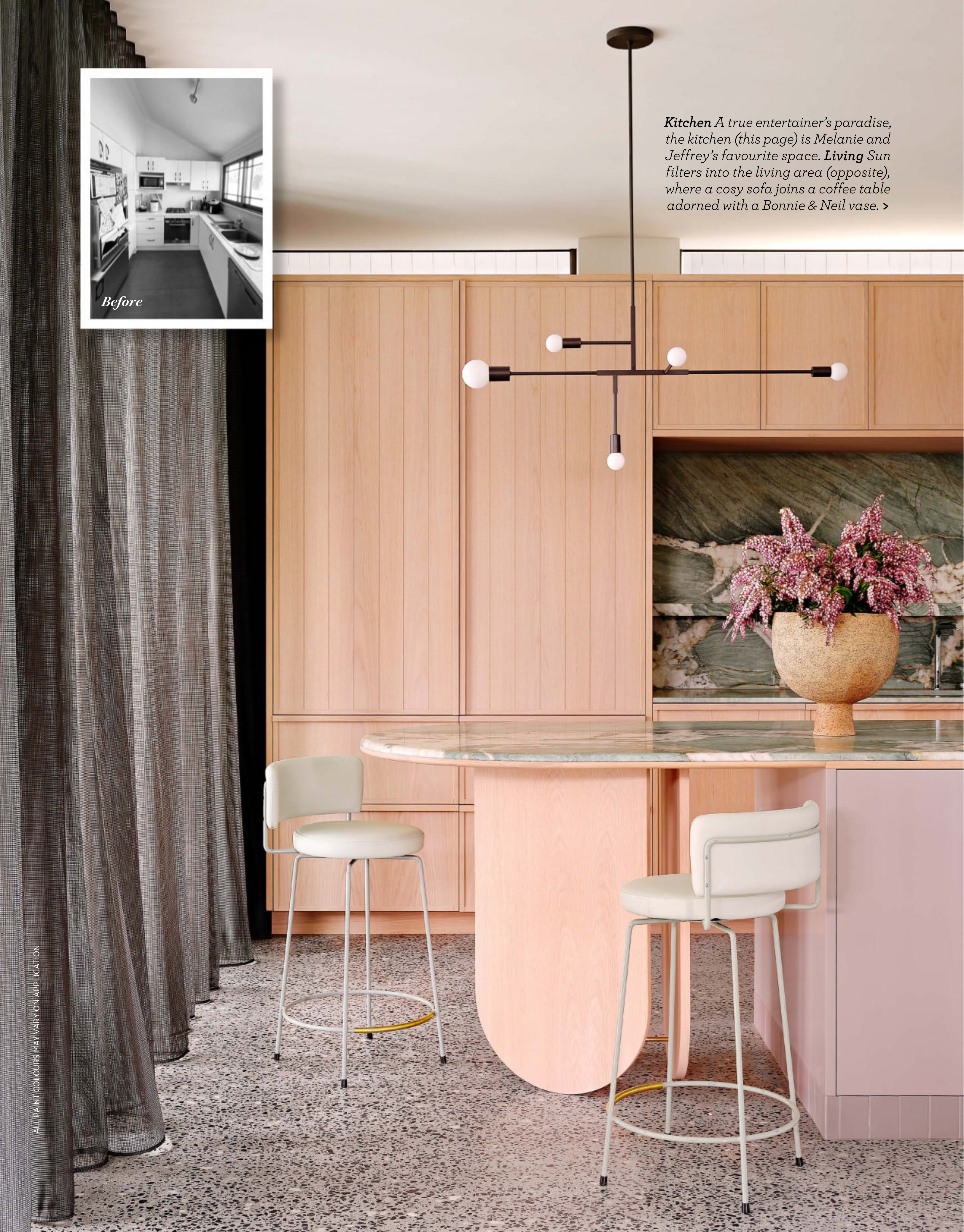
NEW HEIGHTS

This head-turning Queenslander was lifted, extended and reimagined as a forever home for a family of four

STORY KAYLA WRATTEN | PHOTOGRAPHY BROCK B

The Sunshine State's breezy way of life attracted New Zealanders Jeffrey and Melanie when they considered moving abroad with their son William, 19, and daughter Jessica, 18. But it was the potential of a charming old Queenslander – albeit a fixer-upper – that sealed the deal for the family and began a 13-month renovation.

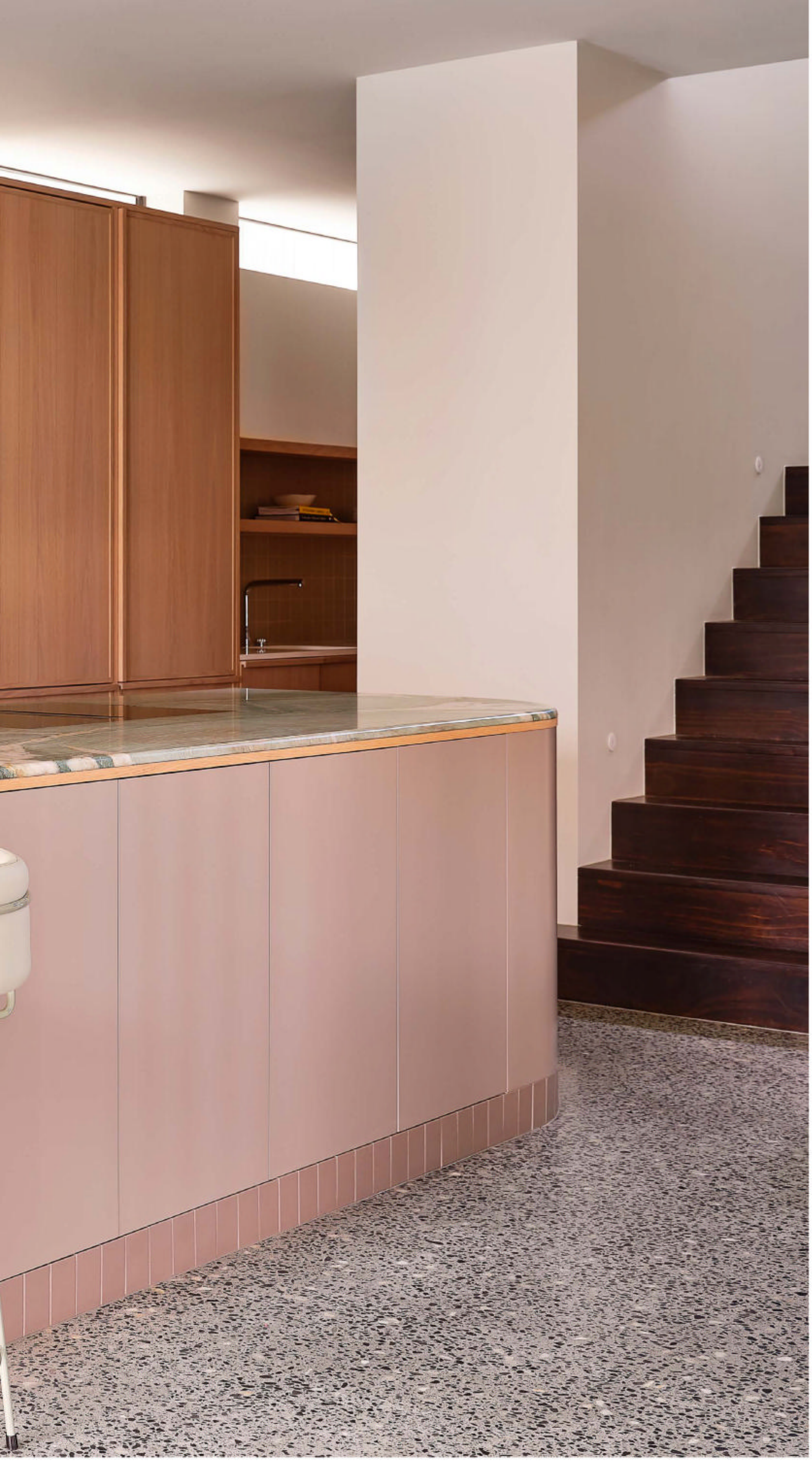
"The landscaping was completely overgrown and the house was run-down and deteriorating," says Darren James of Darren James Interiors, who helmed the project. "It all told the story of a house that had been adapted over many years without any major cohesive planning." The once-cramped abode is now a luxurious haven, with an entirely new layout, greater functionality and a blend of modern style and heritage charm.



Before

Kitchen *A true entertainer's paradise, the kitchen (this page) is Melanie and Jeffrey's favourite space.* ***Living*** *Sun filters into the living area (opposite), where a cosy sofa joins a coffee table adorned with a Bonnie & Neil vase.* >

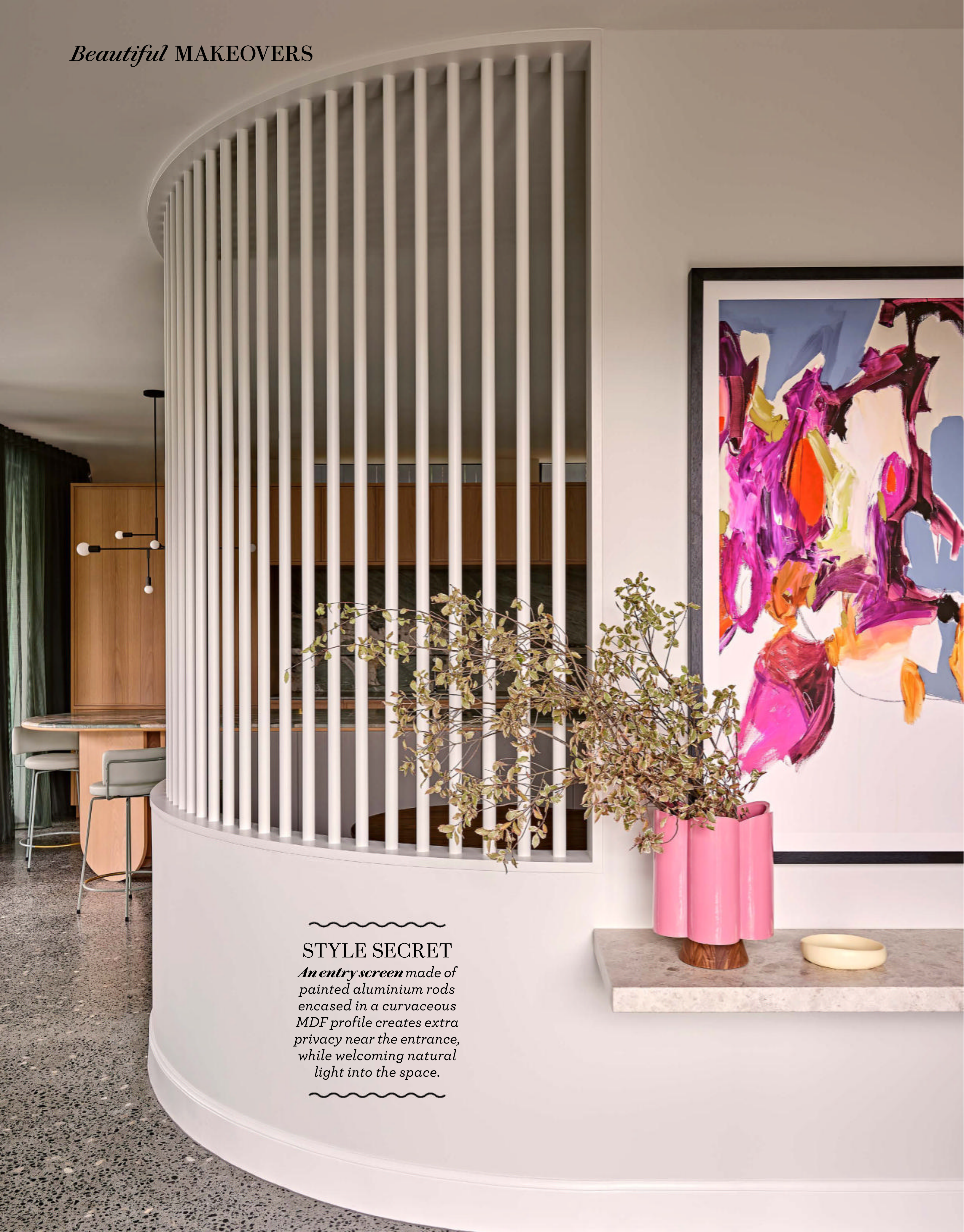
ALL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION



THE RENO JOURNEY

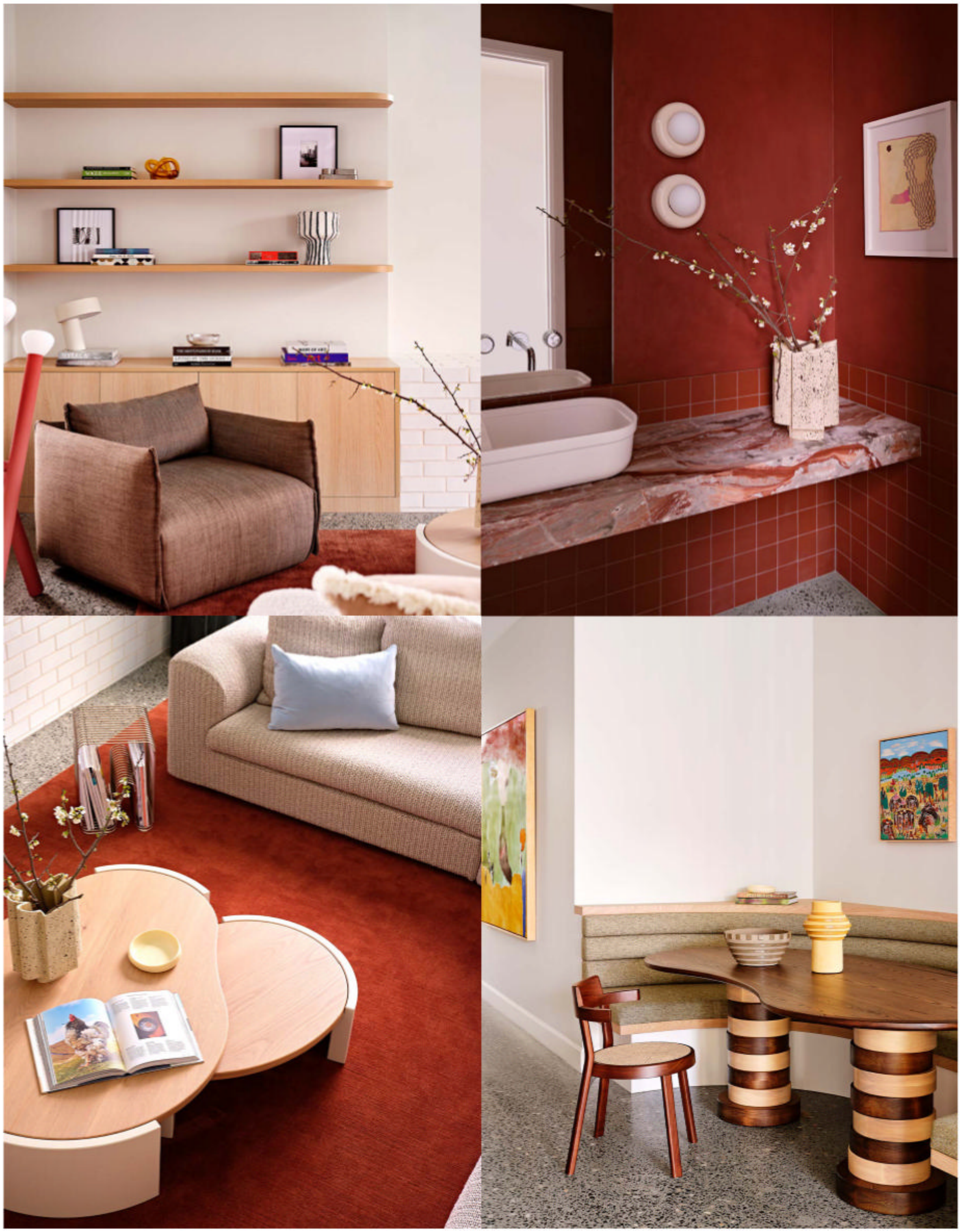
Who? *Jeffrey and Melanie, their son William, 19, daughter Jessica, 18, and dog Riley.* ***Where?*** *Inner-city Brisbane.* ***Original property?*** *A three-bedroom, one-bathroom Queenslander.* ***Time frame?*** *13 months.* ***Why renovate?*** *Situated in a leafy suburb near the CBD, the owners loved the location and wanted to fix up the old heritage home.* ***Must-haves?*** *An informal dining space and a pool.* ***The works?*** *Raising and building underneath the home, reconfiguring the upper level and extending.* ***Favourite aspect?*** *"The integrated kitchen has been wonderful," says Melanie. "The main bench always looks incredible."*

Kitchen *The kitchen has generous bench space, a large, open scullery and integrated appliances. "We collaborated with Farmers Doors to create a custom jonery profile – a modern take on the traditional Shaker – nodding to the home's heritage," shares Darren. He chose a natural oak finish for the cabinetry to complement the sage veining in the Cristanza quartzite benchtops from Artedomus. Kickboards crafted from Japanese 'Antilia' tiles by Artedomus surround the island base, while above, the Lambert & Fils 'Cliff 01' suspension light adds visual interest.* >



STYLE SECRET

An entry screen *made of painted aluminium rods encased in a curvaceous MDF profile creates extra privacy near the entrance, while welcoming natural light into the space.*



Living *A Ross Gardam 'Hearth' occasional chair is within arm's reach of chic open shelving in the living area (top left), decorated with books, framed photos and objets d'art. A vivid 'Parma Terra' area rug from The Rug Establishment anchors the space (bottom left)* ***Powder room*** *The rich red hue of Porter's Paints 'Fresco' plaster envelops the upper walls in the powder room (top right). "We paired it with another beautiful quartzite from Artedomus called Jade Wine, which added to the depth and contrast in the room," says Darren.* ***Dining nook*** *"We spend the most time together in our dining nook, which is the best place to share our day," says Melanie of the built-in banquette (bottom right). The seat is upholstered in 'Omni' fabric in Swamp by James Dunlop Textiles, while the bespoke table was created with Christopher Blank.* ***Entry*** *The ground floor has a mix of materials, including the polished concrete flooring (opposite).* **>**

ARTWORKS (THIS PAGE, TOP RIGHT) **MAX MANNING** (THIS PAGE, BOTTOM RIGHT ON LEFT) **HAROLD DAVID** (THIS PAGE, BOTTOM RIGHT ON RIGHT) **JOANNE NAPANGARDI WHEELER** (OPPOSITE) **KERRY ARMSTRONG**

KINFOLK TRAVEL
LIVING BY THE OCEAN

EXPERT EYE

When being bold *with colour, "The key is knowing when to let it lead and how to balance it with texture, natural stone or neutral tones, so it feels cohesive," says Darren. This, he says, helps avoid overwhelm.*

The makeover

The renovation involved excavating the lower level, squaring the site and raising the home. Darren says he then had to reconfigure the upper level and extend the rear "to create a generous, modern family home with indoor-outdoor flow, a pool, and landscaped gardens".

A thoughtfully designed layout was key. The couple prioritised a generous downstairs entertaining space to host family from New Zealand. Meanwhile, the upper level was kept private and serene. The heart of the home – and the biggest splurge – became the kitchen and dining area. "This space provides us with pleasure everyday, so it was well worth the investment," says Melanie.

Nearly every design decision was guided by a commitment to honour the home's heritage, while adding a fresh, contemporary edge. "We worked closely with our town planner, who outlined exactly what needed to be retained and what flexibility we had," explains Darren.

Living *"We used a deep bottle-green sheer curtain to add a sense of warmth and intimacy," says Darren of the net-like Kvadrat 'Aerio 0024' fabric. "This, with the building's brick plinth and contemporary furniture, created a space that felt layered, cosy and cohesive." Against floor-to-ceiling views, the relaxing living area stars 'Frida' nesting coffee tables and a 'Thursday' modular sofa, both from Jardan.* >

Best advice

"Spend time investigating the companies you've shortlisted to do your interiors or renovation," says Melanie, who suggests visiting candidates' earlier projects to see how they've aged. "Most renovations look amazing in the first six months. But more importantly, how do they look after three years? These project visits offered us so many insights and provided a better idea of the workmanship and planning that went into a project."

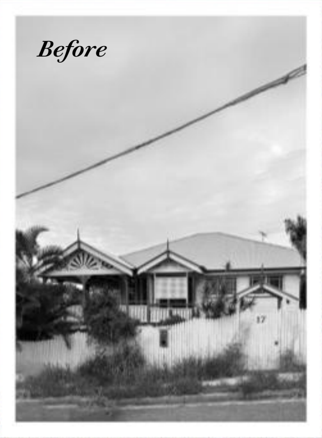
Lessons learnt

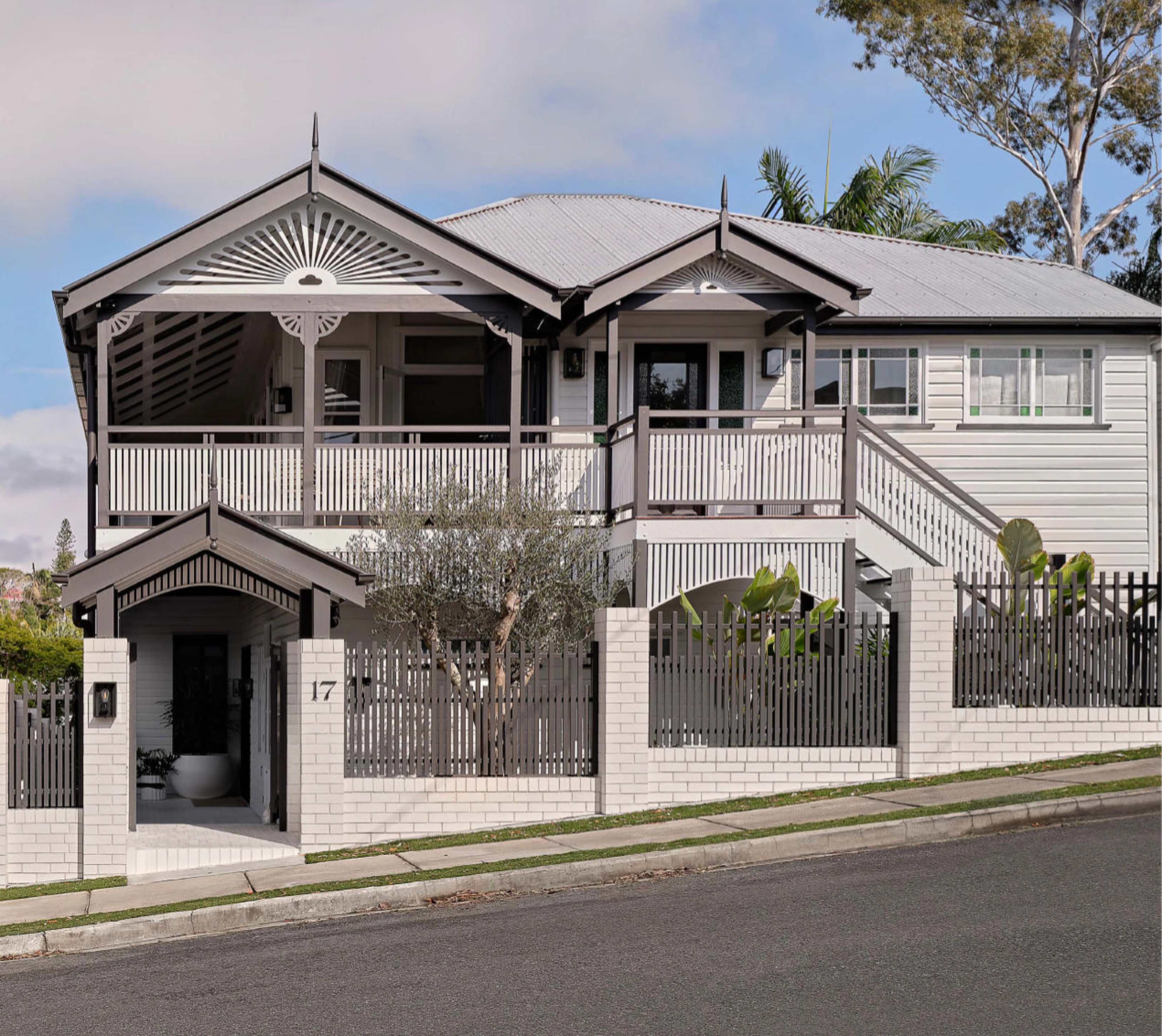
With plans to both raise and extend their original home, Jeffrey and Melanie knew the renovation journey would be lengthy and expensive. Setbacks, including difficulties excavating the lower-ground floor and discovering asbestos, added costs as well as time. This reinforced the importance of planning both budgets and timelines with the worst-case scenario in mind. "We had a budget and a buffer; both were used," says Melanie.

SOURCE BOOK

Interior design and building *Darren James Interiors, darrenjames.com.au.* ***Joinery*** *Farmers Doors, farmersdoors.com.*

Facade *With its strong street appeal, the facade celebrates the original Queenslander alongside modern elements, such as the gatehouse entry (this page). "We used three colours: Dulux Mcginley on the weatherboards, Dulux Lexicon Quarter on the trims, and Dulux Monument to highlight the sills, gutters, fascias, posts and heritage mouldings," explains Darren. It's a striking first impression of what has become the family's forever home. "Darren James created the most beautiful space for us to live in," shares Melanie.* **Alfresco** *Reminiscent of Mediterranean architecture, a grand trio of archways nod to the home's subtropical surrounds (opposite). "We introduced 'La Paloma' Austral Bricks in Castellana for the archways and boundary wall, adding another layer of texture and warmth," says Darren. "It all comes together in a cohesive balance of old and new."* HB


Before



BEFORE + AFTER

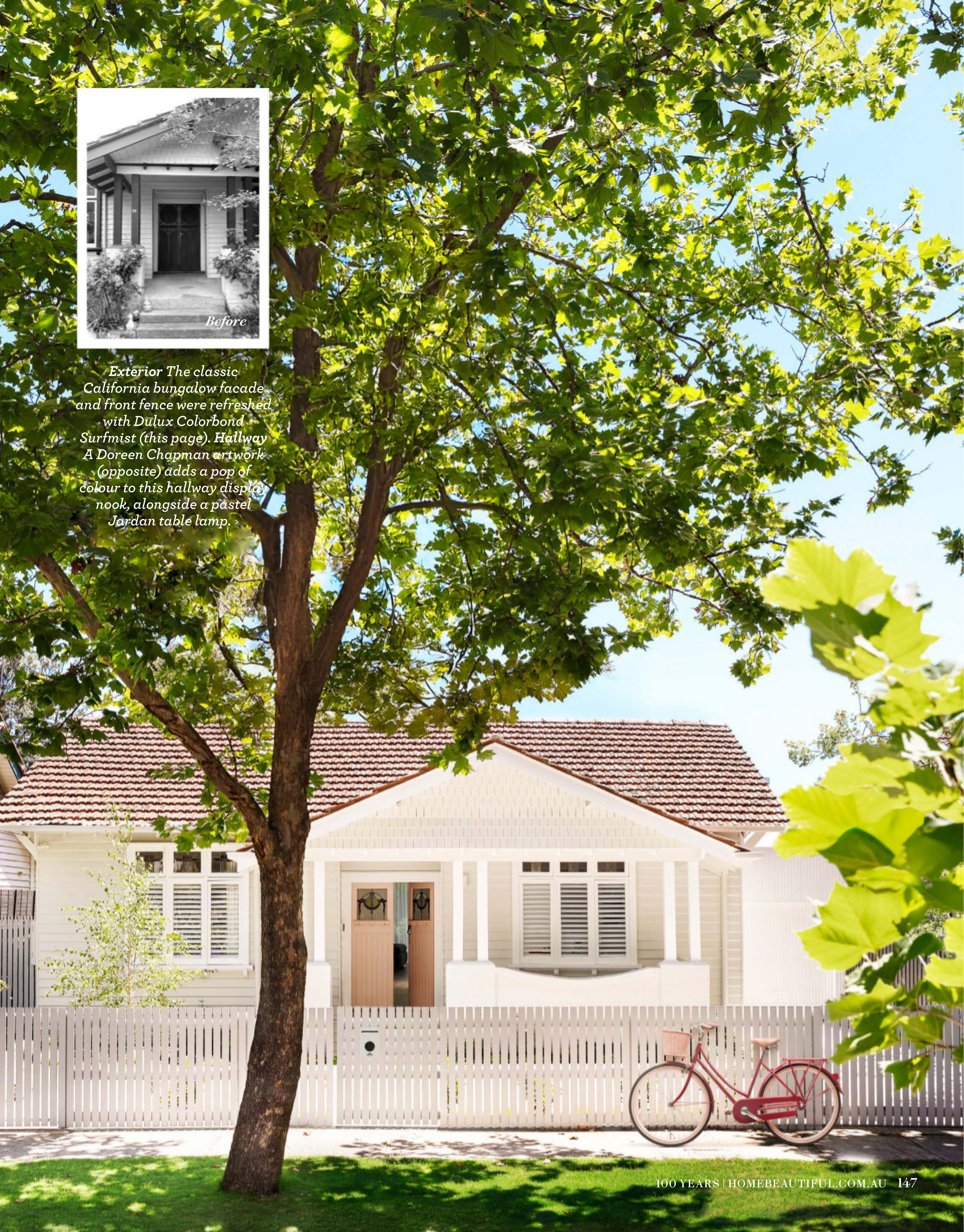
UP & OUT

A designer's dramatic renewal of this 1920s house marries timeless form with contemporary function

STORY **JACKIE BRYGEL** | PHOTOGRAPHY **MARTINA GEMMOLA**

After living in Italy for six years, a couple and their three young daughters bid *arrivederci* to the European dream and returned to Australia. They were greeted with open arms by loved ones but the period home they bought in Melbourne didn't extend as warm a welcome. Dark and dated with an impractical floor plan resulting from decades of mismatched renovations, the house lacked modern comfort and cohesion. Fortunately, Mikayla Rose, director and principal designer at Heartly, knew where to begin. She set to work masterminding a top-to-toe renewal of the original house, coupled with a two-storey addition at the rear. "We needed to create a spacious and uplifting contemporary home for this joyful family," Mikayla says of the 18-month project.

ALL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

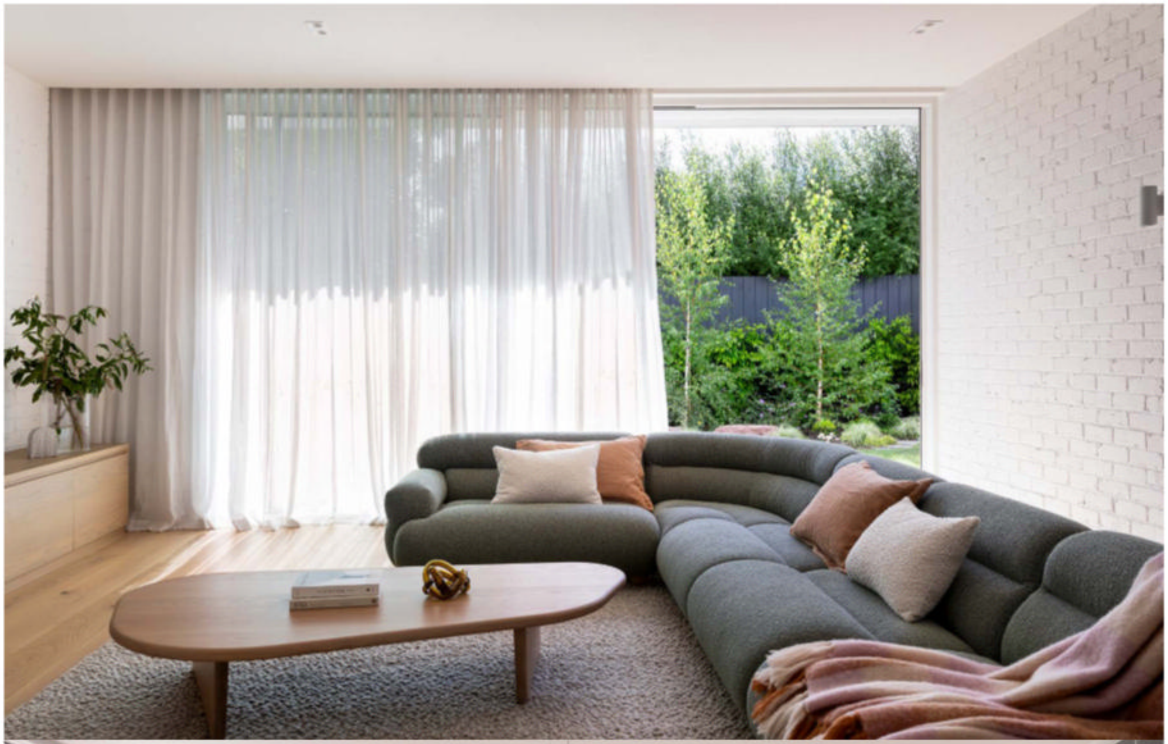


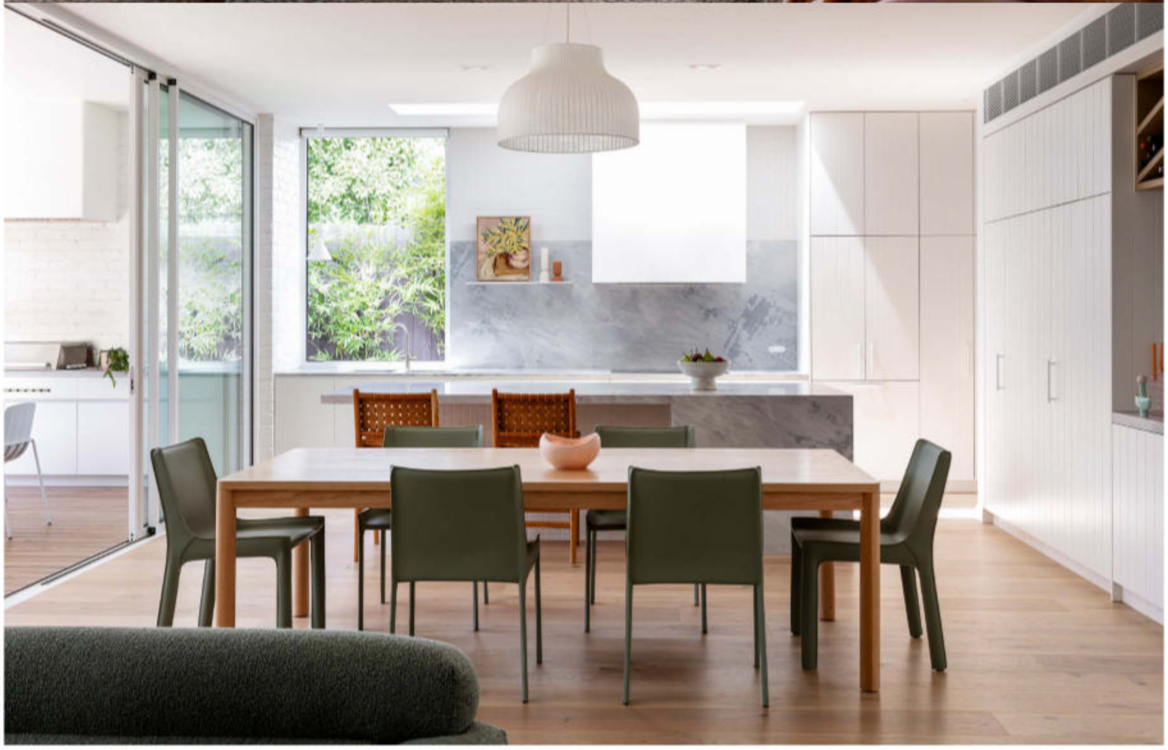
Exterior *The classic California bungalow facade and front fence were refreshed with Dulux Colorbond Surfmist (this page).* ***Hallway*** *A Doreen Chapman artwork (opposite) adds a pop of colour to this hallway display nook, alongside a pastel Jardan table lamp.* >

Before

EXPERT EYE

Illuminating the dining *domain, an oversized Muuto 'Strand' pendant (opposite) "adds another layer to the white palette and brings a soft, floaty feeling to the hard surfaces," says Mikayla.*





ARTWORK BY EMMA LEONARD (THIS PAGE) AND JANEY FORBES (OPPOSITE)

Living *A 'Valley' modular sofa upholstered in Luna Oregano is teamed with a 'Molly' coffee table, both from Jardan (this page, top). Floaty sheers in Mokum's 'Kanso Stonewash' in Bone are a timeless choice for the window furnishings.* ***Kitchen*** *Opening out to the garden, the open-plan dining is furnished with a stylish setting from Jardan, with 'Pasadena' leather counter stools from Abide Interiors offering additional spots to perch (this page, bottom). In the kitchen, gleaming slabs of Elba dolomite from Artedomus bring style and lustre to the cooking zone. Bespoke V-groove panelled cabinetry in quarter-strength Dulux Natural White was selected to add texture to the tonal scheme.* ***Entrance*** *The original front doors were revived with Dulux Piglet, a request from the owners' daughters (pictured, opposite) who wanted the whole house painted pink. This casts a rosy glow across the Made by Storey 'Sesame' flooring.* >

The makeover

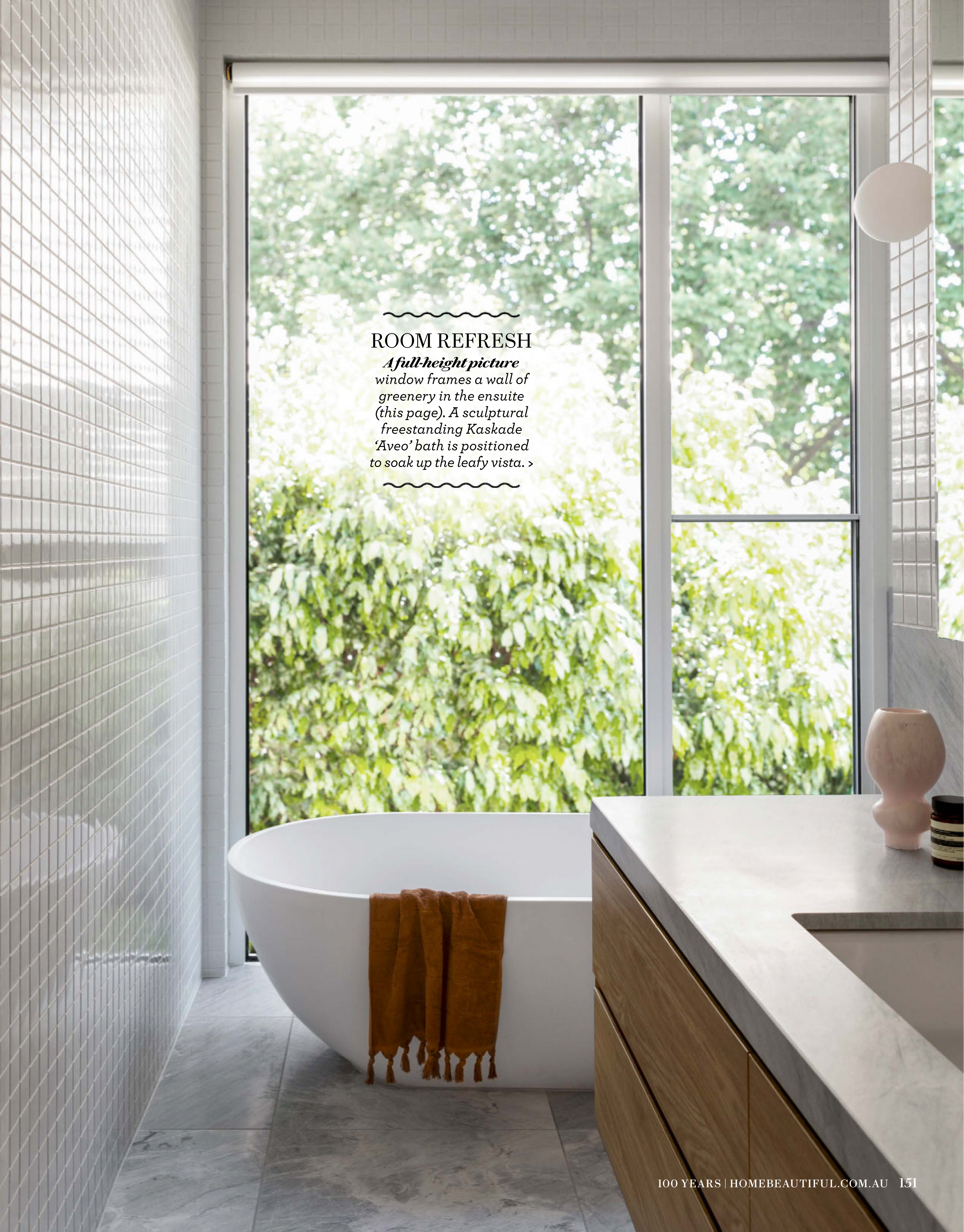
The classic California bungalow facade was retained, along with the two rooms facing the street, but the 'bits and pieces' added over the decades were demolished and replaced by a contemporary two-level extension, including a new garage. "This allowed us to establish a very convenient floor plan, where groceries can be dropped in the walk-in pantry, which is now connected to a mudroom and the kitchen," explains Mikayla.

A pared back palette of grey and white Elba dolomite and European oak flooring gives the home a timeless feel, with bursts of pink and green providing cohesion throughout. "The spaces feel uplifting, joyful and deeply personal," says Mikayla. The result is a beautifully renewed home imbued with happiness and harmony. Keeping within budget, the renovation ran smoothly. While the family has since sold the home, it will always hold a place in their hearts.

***Main bedroom** Once a study, the parents' retreat is now a restful haven (this page). Proving pattern and colour can be calming, vibrant linen from Kip & Co is teamed with white cushions from Adairs and a Waverley Mills throw. The original leadlight windows and a new ceiling rose provide period charm.* ***Ensuite** Honed Elba stone tops the Duropal 'Oiled Oak' vanity from Bench Top City (opposite). Expanses of Elba stone tiles from Artedomus are beautifully balanced by glossy white mosaic tiles from National Tiles.*

THE RENO JOURNEY

Who? *A couple with three young daughters.* ***Where?*** *Melbourne's north-east suburbs.* ***Original property?*** *A three bedroom, single level 1920s California bungalow.* ***Time frame?*** *18 months.* ***Why renovate?*** *Located in a quiet street 7km from Melbourne's CBD, the home's period facade held great appeal but the owners wanted the home to be brighter and roomier.* ***Must-haves?*** *A strong link between the living spaces and rear garden, a playroom that grows with the family and two additional bedrooms.* ***The works?*** *Restoring the original rooms and constructing a double-storey rear addition.* ***Favourite aspect?*** *"The void in the entry that drops light over the stairs, drawing the eye to a view of the sky," says Mikayla.*



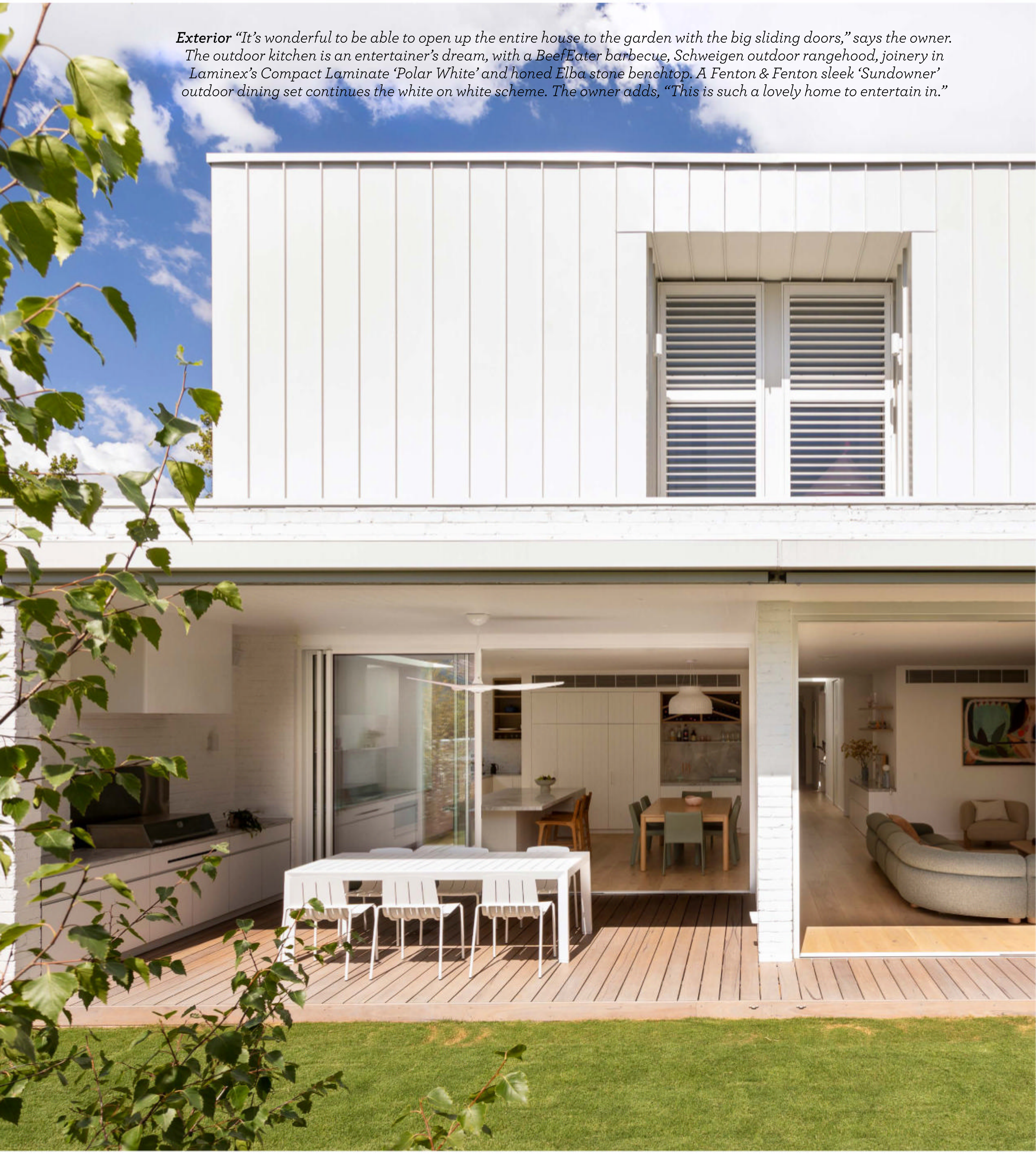
ROOM REFRESH

A full-height picture *window frames a wall of greenery in the ensuite (this page). A sculptural freestanding Kaskade 'Aveo' bath is positioned to soak up the leafy vista.* >

Backyard *"One of the features we love is the curved brick seating wall," says the owner. "There are some big rocks among the silver birch trees, and the girls (one pictured this page) created their own obstacle course between them and the seating wall."* ***Alfresco*** *On the spotted-gum deck, a recycled red brick wall painted in Dulux quarter-strength Natural White forms a tactile backdrop to the outdoor kitchen (opposite).* >

STYLE SECRET

All natural stone is *porous and care needs to be taken to avoid staining. Mikayla used TuffSkin Surface Protection on the Artedomus Elba dolomite benchtops in both indoor and alfresco kitchens.*



Exterior *"It's wonderful to be able to open up the entire house to the garden with the big sliding doors," says the owner. The outdoor kitchen is an entertainer's dream, with a BeefEater barbecue, Schweigen outdoor rangehood, joinery in Laminex's Compact Laminate 'Polar White' and honed Elba stone benchtop. A Fenton & Fenton sleek 'Sundowner' outdoor dining set continues the white on white scheme. The owner adds, "This is such a lovely home to entertain in."*

ARTWORK BY AMANDA KETTERER

Best advice

Mikayla suggests using art to tell a compelling tale throughout the home. "Art should invoke emotion, whether it's joy, drama or intrigue," says Mikayla. "I encourage clients to collect and gather art as they move through life, rather than 'go shopping' for a specific piece. Art should not sit blandly in a room without any relationship to you."

Lessons learnt

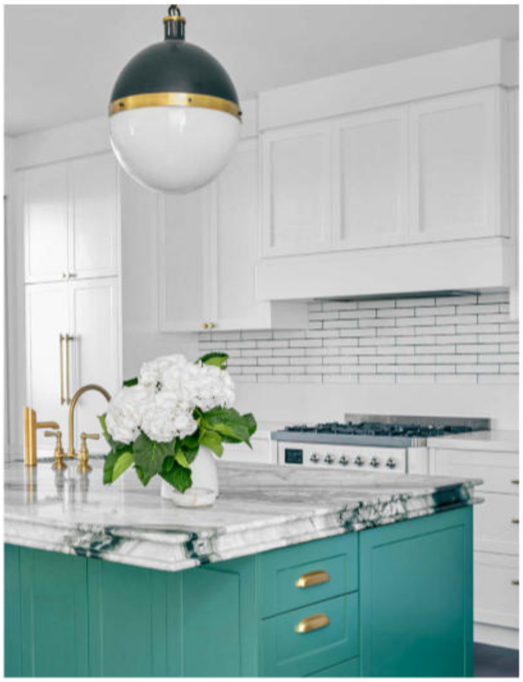
White doesn't have to be clinical. "The brief called for a fresh, clean aesthetic with an emphasis on predominantly white selections," says Mikayla. "The balance of materials and textures, and the inclusion of warmer finishes, such as timbers and fabrics, is critical when working with a such a monochrome palette." Mikayla also considered how the outlook to the garden, as well as the owners' art collection and furnishings, would inform the extent to which she was able to repeat white on white.

SOURCE BOOK

Interior design *Heartly, heartly.com.au.*
Builder *LVL Group, lvlgroup.com.au.*
Landscape design *Peachy Green, peachygreen.com.au.*
Landscape construction *Modern Outdoor Living, modernoutdoorliving.com.au.*

Before

BEFORE + AFTER

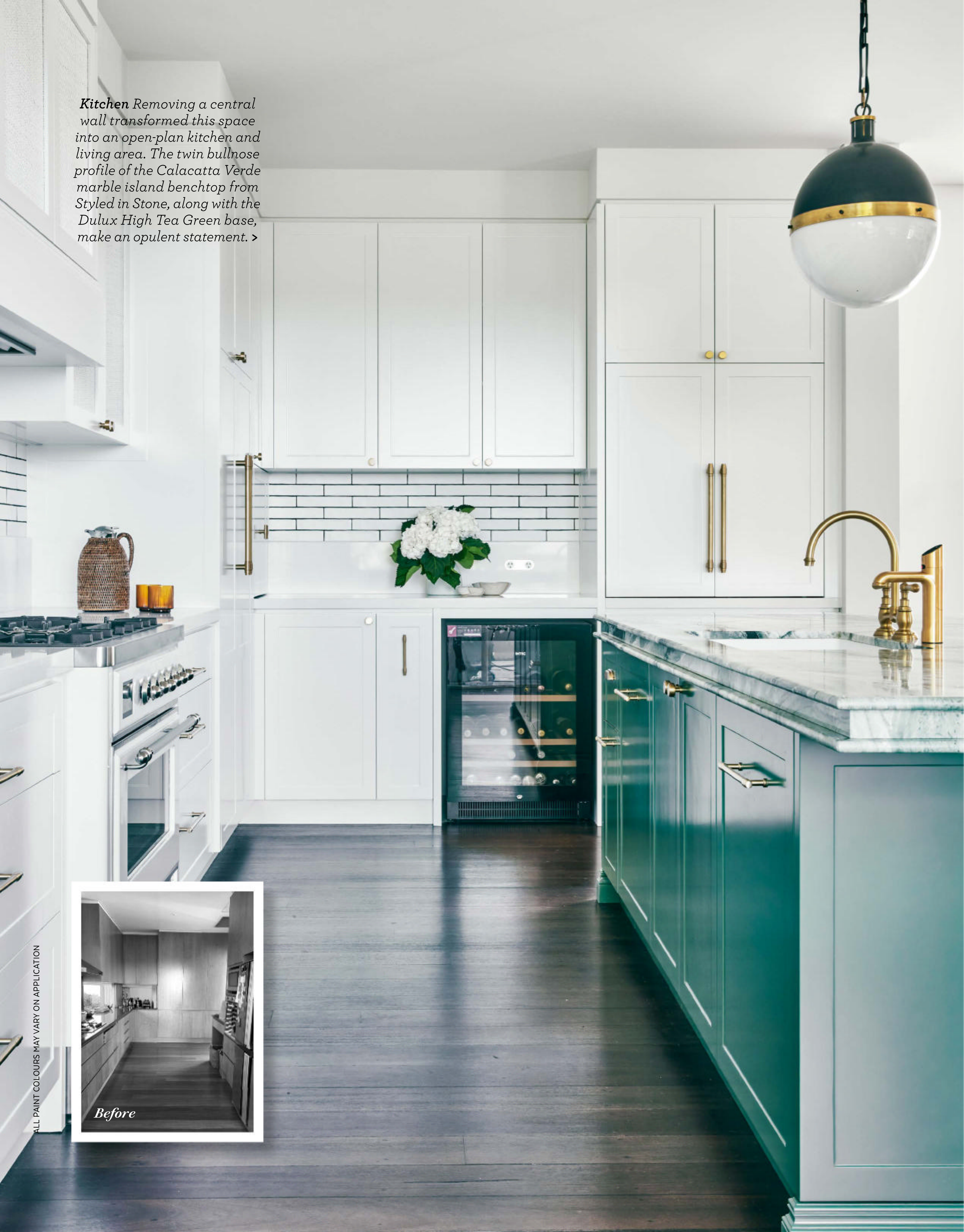


SET THE TONE

A tired beachside home is reimagined with colonial character and a fresh aquamarine palette

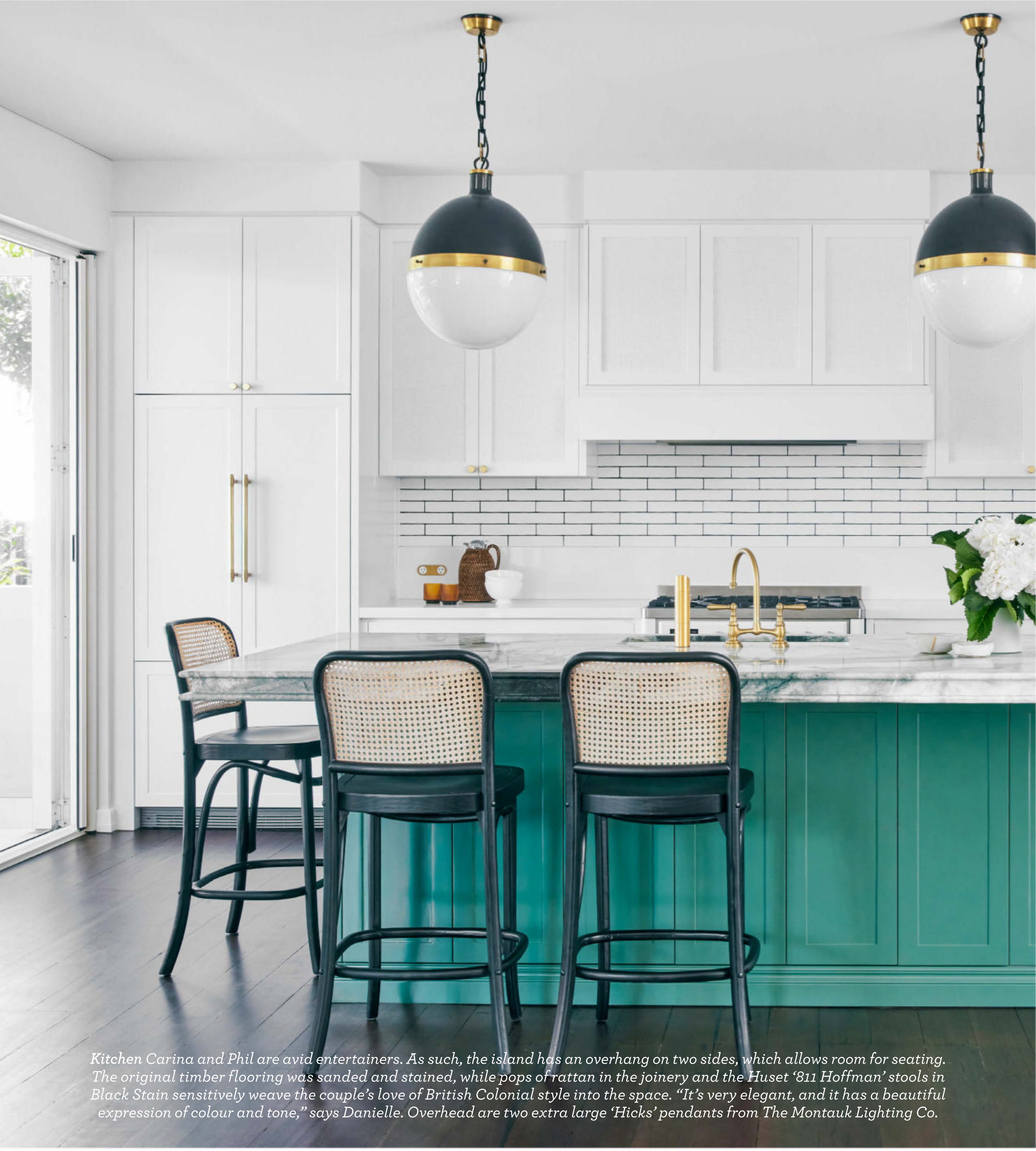
WORDS **TENEAL ZUVELA** | PHOTOGRAPHY **ESS CREATIVE** | STYLING **BREE OLIVER**

When Carina and her husband Phil found a generously sized home just a short walk from the beach on Sydney's Lower North Shore, they were happy to overlook its tired interiors in exchange for the dream coastal lifestyle."The house was completely rebuilt in 2000 and, while its design had solid foundations, the years were beginning to take their toll," says Carina. "The interior felt a bit ordinary, with a lot of tan wood joinery – nothing that sparked excitement." A longing for more character and colour led the couple to Danielle Bonello-Dunsford of Danielle Victoria Design, who helped weave Carina and Phil's love of British Colonial design, and their desire for greater functionality, into the refreshed interiors.

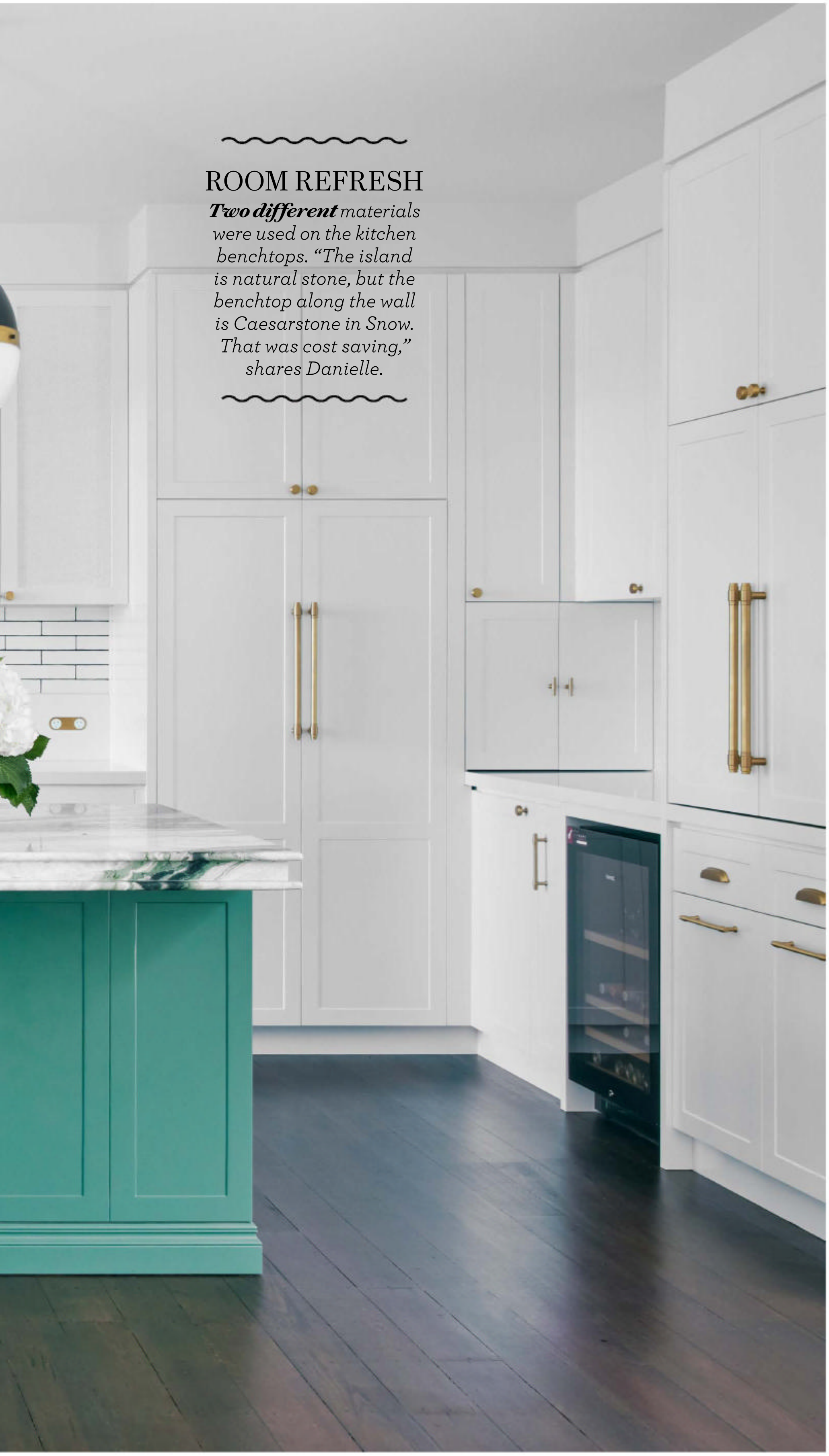


Kitchen *Removing a central wall transformed this space into an open-plan kitchen and living area. The twin bullnose profile of the Calacatta Verde marble island benchtop from Styled in Stone, along with the Dulux High Tea Green base, make an opulent statement.* >

ALL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

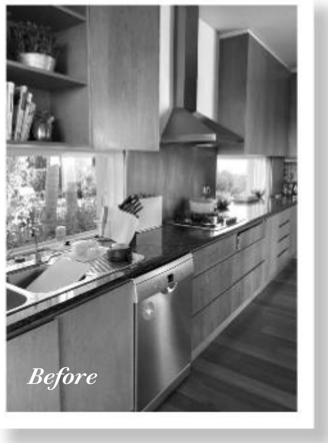


Kitchen *Carina and Phil are avid entertainers. As such, the island has an overhang on two sides, which allows room for seating. The original timber flooring was sanded and stained, while pops of rattan in the joinery and the Huset '811 Hoffman' stools in Black Stain sensitively weave the couple's love of British Colonial style into the space. "It's very elegant, and it has a beautiful expression of colour and tone," says Danielle. Overhead are two extra large 'Hicks' pendants from The Montauk Lighting Co.*



ROOM REFRESH

Two different *materials were used on the kitchen benchtops. "The island is natural stone, but the benchtop along the wall is Caesarstone in Snow. That was cost saving," shares Danielle.*



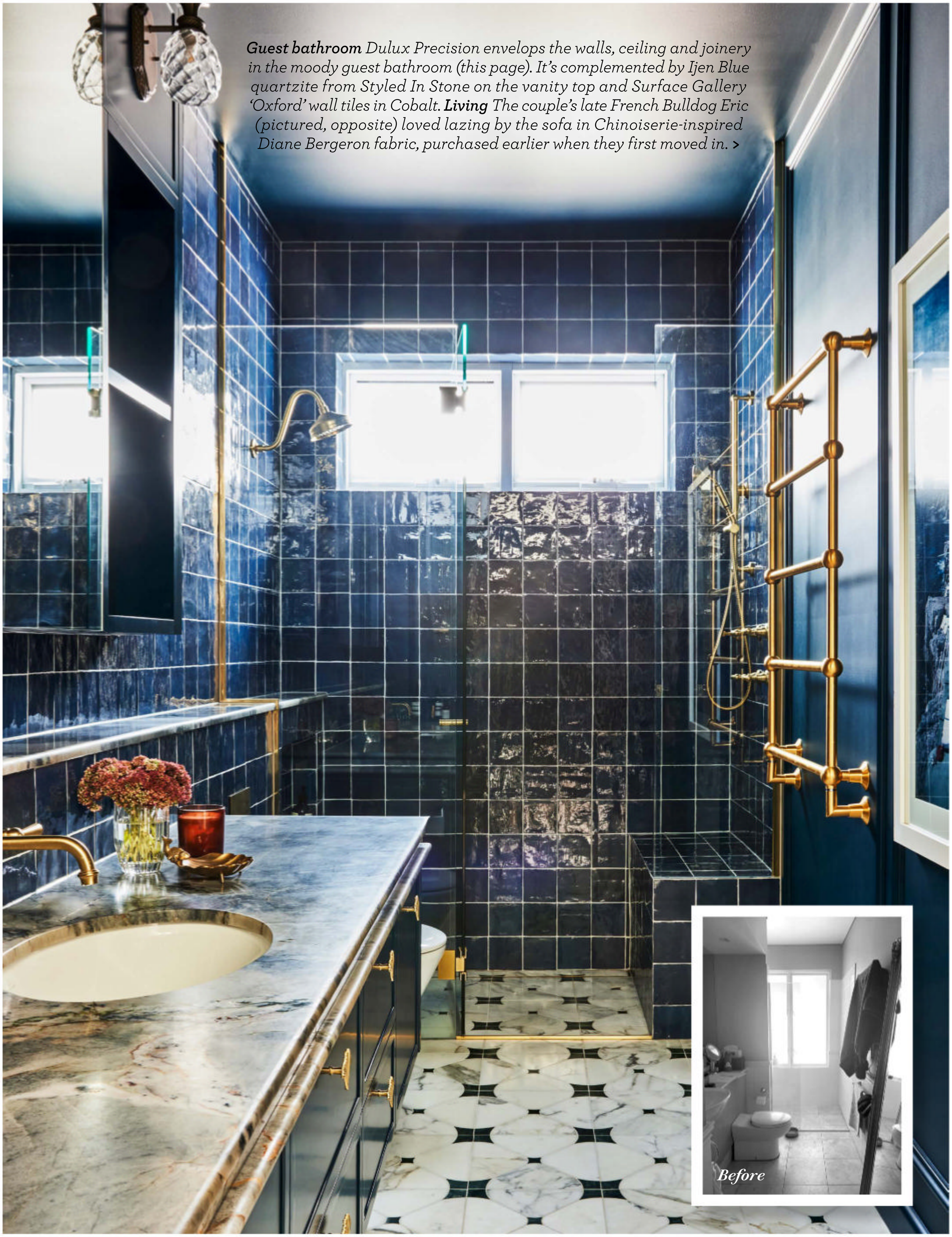
Before

The makeover

Having already embarked on an exterior renovation in 2019, Carina and Phil were eager to bring the interiors of their home up to the same standard. At the top of their wishlist was the kitchen, which was not only closed off from the living space, but also didn't offer enough privacy. "The original kitchen had one of those splashback windows that looked over to the neighbour's pool, so they would always catch glimpses of each other," explains Danielle.

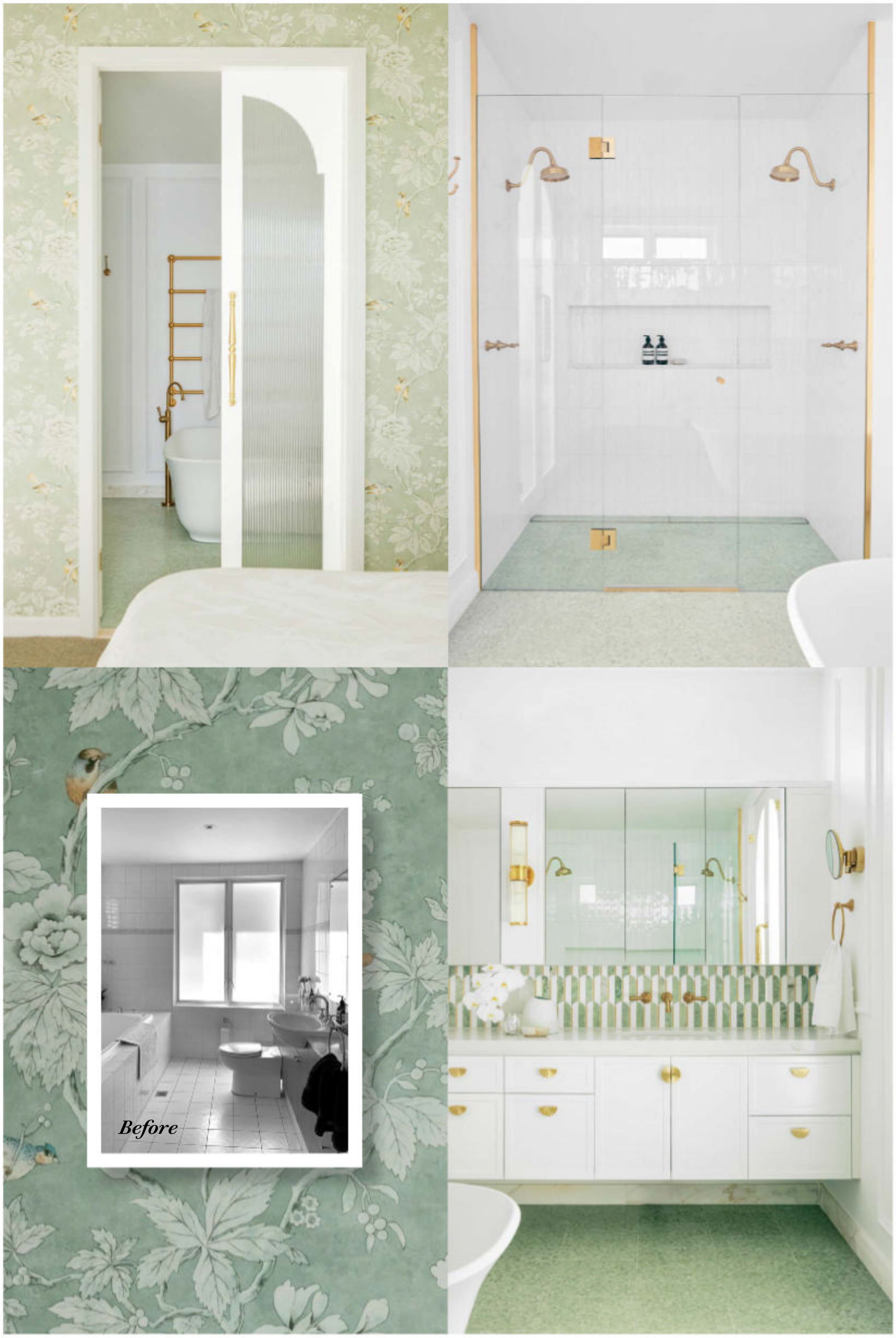
Blocking up the problematic window and removing the dividing wall between the kitchen and living room created a more inviting, open-plan layout that naturally saw the cooking space transform into the new heart of the home. "The green marble island has become a central gathering spot for family and friends," says Carina.

The renovation covered much of the home's sizeable floor plan, with each room reimagined to better reflect the couple's desire for a more classic style. Luxurious natural stone, brushed brass hardware and marble mosaic tiles are anchored in the fresh green palette. "The goal was to open up the kitchen and living room and add some real wow factor to the spaces – and we think we have achieved that," says Carina. >



Guest bathroom *Dulux Precision envelops the walls, ceiling and joinery in the moody guest bathroom (this page). It's complemented by Ijen Blue quartzite from Styled In Stone on the vanity top and Surface Gallery 'Oxford' wall tiles in Cobalt.* ***Living*** *The couple's late French Bulldog Eric (pictured, opposite) loved lazing by the sofa in Chinoiserie-inspired Diane Bergeron fabric, purchased earlier when they first moved in.* >

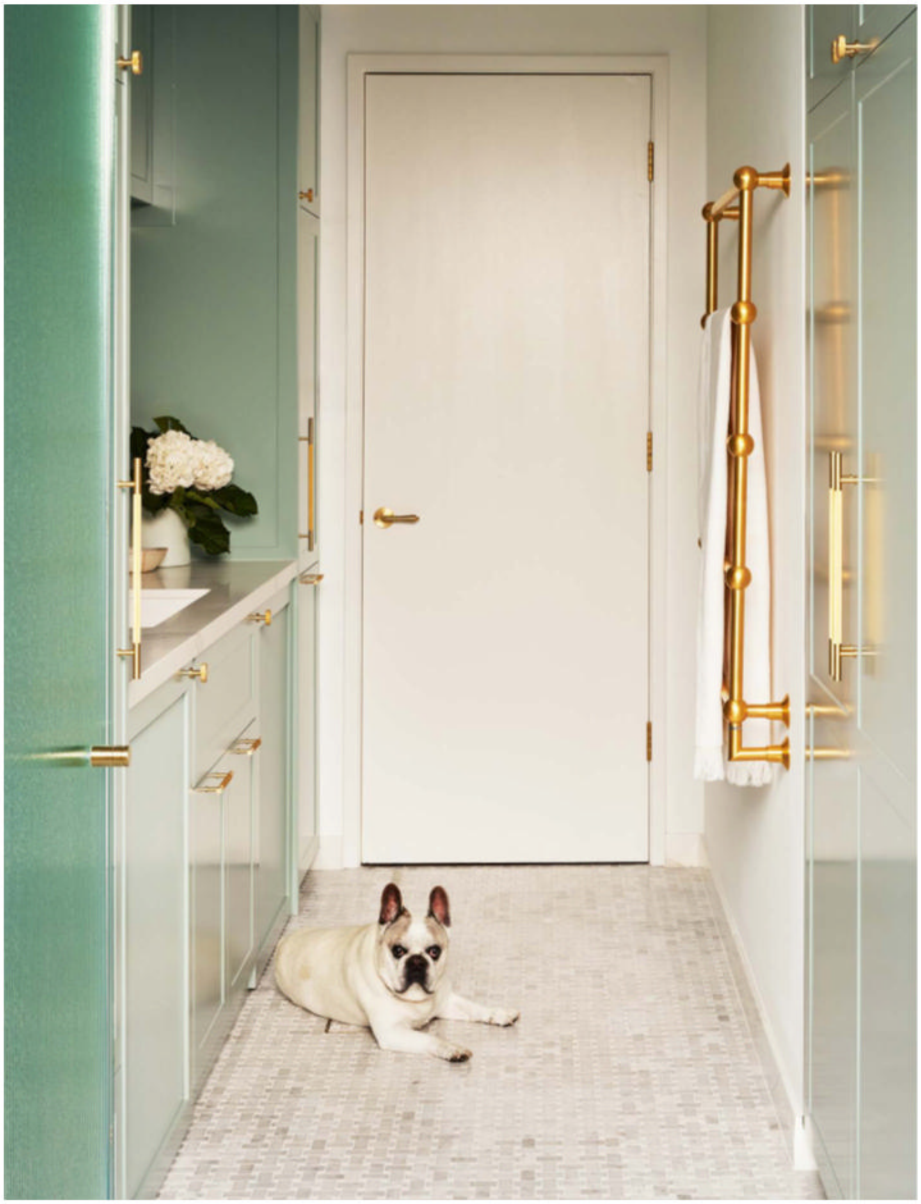
ARTWORK 'HOTEL DU CAP-EDEN-ROC 1' PRINT BY SLIM AARONS



Main ensuite *By knocking through the main bedroom wall to install fluted glass French doors (top left), the underused family bathroom was transformed into a sophisticated and highly functional ensuite (top right & bottom right). The soft green palette flows on from the bedroom with mosaic floor tiles in verdant shades. A Victoria + Albert 'Amiata 1500' freestanding bath and Brodware 'Neu England' dual showers in Brushed Nordic Brass add luxe touches. The final flourish is Intrim wainscoting and the green Marble Mosaics 'Lucille' tiled splashback.* ***Main bedroom*** *Already dressed in Sanderson 'Chiswick Grove' wallpaper in Sage prior to the renovation, the main bedroom (bottom left & opposite) provided the perfect starting point for the soft green palette that continues throughout the home. In fact, Carina and Phil like it so much that they have made it their own room instead of reserving it for guests, as originally planned.*

STYLE SECRET

"We love the colour *green as it's the shade most connected with nature. It's also a versatile colour in interiors as it pairs well with materials like wood, linen, brass and stone," says Carina.* >



Best advice

Carina went into the renovation with a flexible mindset, after being advised by friends that things don't always go to plan. These pearls of wisdom proved useful when the homeowners needed to change course to work within their budget. "We were going to do detailed cornices, but it was going to add too much cost. Instead, we splurged on natural stone, high-end tapware and marble mosaic tiles," says Danielle.

Lessons learnt

Carina and Phil lived in their home for five years before commencing their renovation journey. The exteriors were completed just before Covid and the couple had an additional four-year wait before undertaking the interior updates. Allowing the project to unfold in its own time ultimately paid off in the end, as they knew exactly what they needed and wanted from the interiors. "Patience makes perfect," shares Carina.

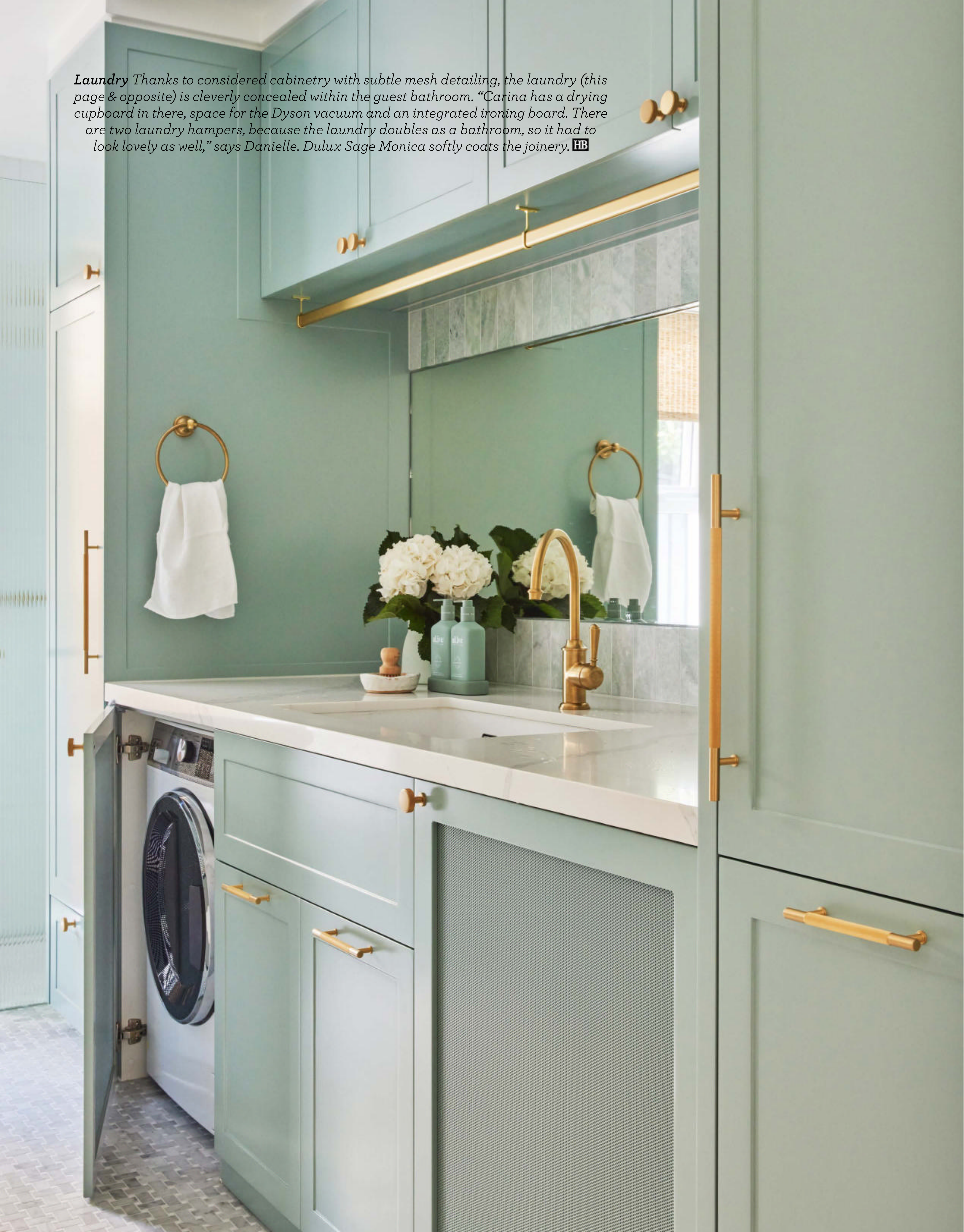
THE RENO JOURNEY

Who? *Carina and Phil, a married couple.*
Where? *Sydney's Lower North Shore.*
Original property? *A generously scaled but uninspiring 2000s build.*
Time frame? *Six months.*
Why renovate? *To make the house as inspiring as the beachside location.*
Must-haves? *More colour and character, a private open-plan kitchen and integrated storage.*
The works? *Structural changes in the kitchen and family bathroom, with the rest of the home receiving an aesthetic refresh.*
Favourite aspect? *"It is a tie between the downstairs bedroom (we like it so much that we've made it our own rather than reserving it for guests) and the open-plan living room and kitchen," says Carina.*

Before

SOURCE BOOK

Interior design *Danielle Victoria Design, daniellevictoria.com.au.*
Builder *Tranquil Projects, tranquilprojects.com.au.*
Joinery *CK Joinery, ckjoinery.com.au.*



Laundry *Thanks to considered cabinetry with subtle mesh detailing, the laundry (this page & opposite) is cleverly concealed within the guest bathroom. "Carina has a drying cupboard in there, space for the Dyson vacuum and an integrated ironing board. There are two laundry hampers, because the laundry doubles as a bathroom, so it had to look lovely as well," says Danielle. Dulux Sage Monica softly coats the joinery.* HB

BEFORE + AFTER

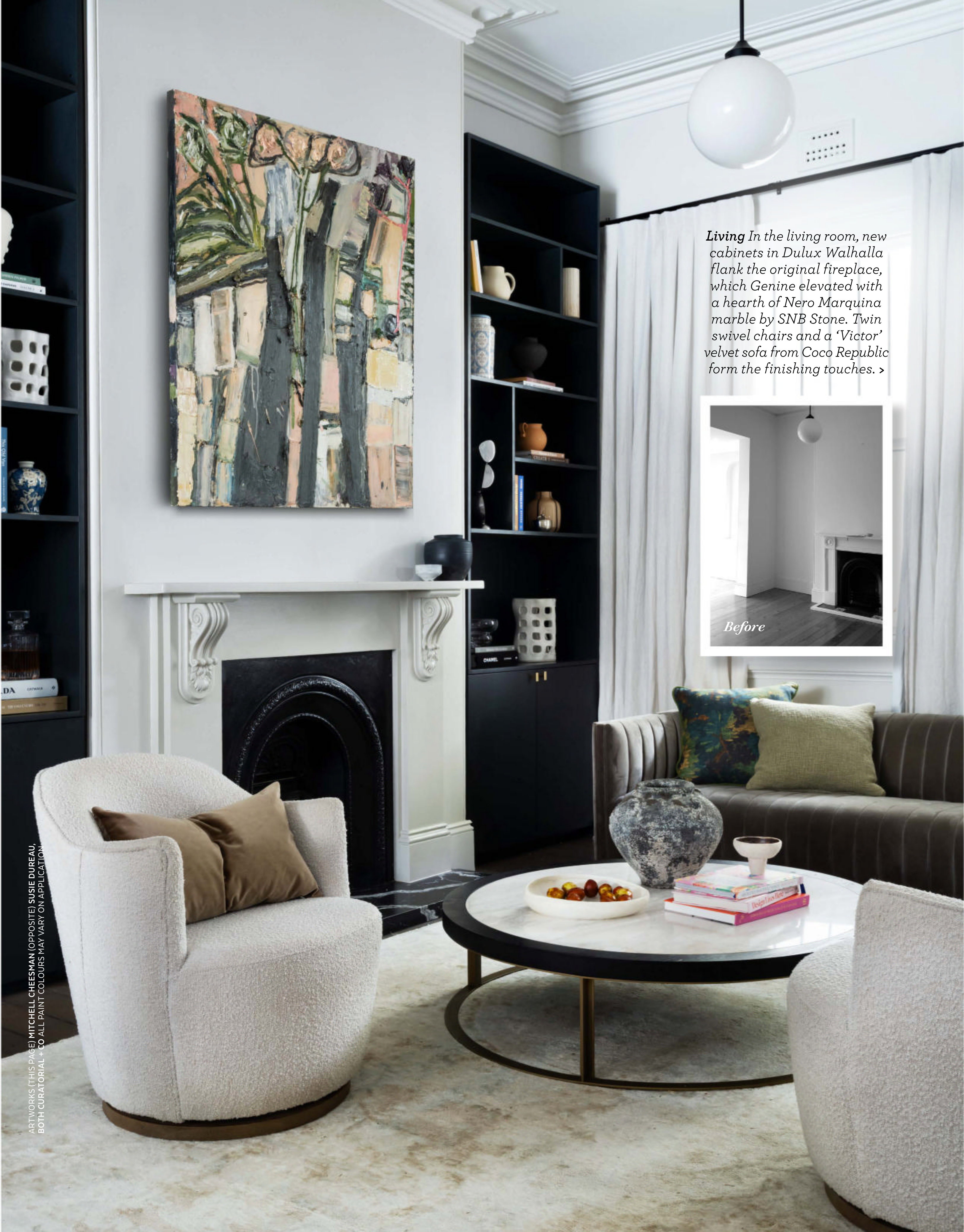
CITY ESCAPE

Amid the hustle and bustle of Sydney, this terrace house is a welcome haven with heritage charm

WORDS **JULIA FAIRLEY** | PHOTOGRAPHY **BRIGID ARNOTT**

After raising her family, inner-city living grew ever more appealing for Sandi, who swapped Sydney's leafy North Shore for a terrace in the beating heart of the city. A short stroll to shops and restaurants, it boasted many benefits, but the interiors were not among them. "It was very plain and all beige; there was no soul, no warmth," recalls interior designer Genine Noakes, who revived the home for Sandi, her partner Darren and her three adult daughters.

Form aside, the floor plan was not fit for purpose. "They wanted everyone to have their own bedroom and bathroom," explains Genine. And so began a top-to-toe redesign and renovation, celebrating the old heritage accents, introducing new conveniences and filling the home with heart and soul.



Living *In the living room, new cabinets in Dulux Walhalla flank the original fireplace, which Genine elevated with a hearth of Nero Marquina marble by SNB Stone. Twin swivel chairs and a 'Victor' velvet sofa from Coco Republic form the finishing touches.* >

ARTWORKS (THIS PAGE) **MITCHELL CHEESMAN** (OPPOSITE) **SUSIE DUREAU, BOTH CURATORIAL + CO** ALL PAINT COLOURS MAY VARY ON APPLICATION

The makeover

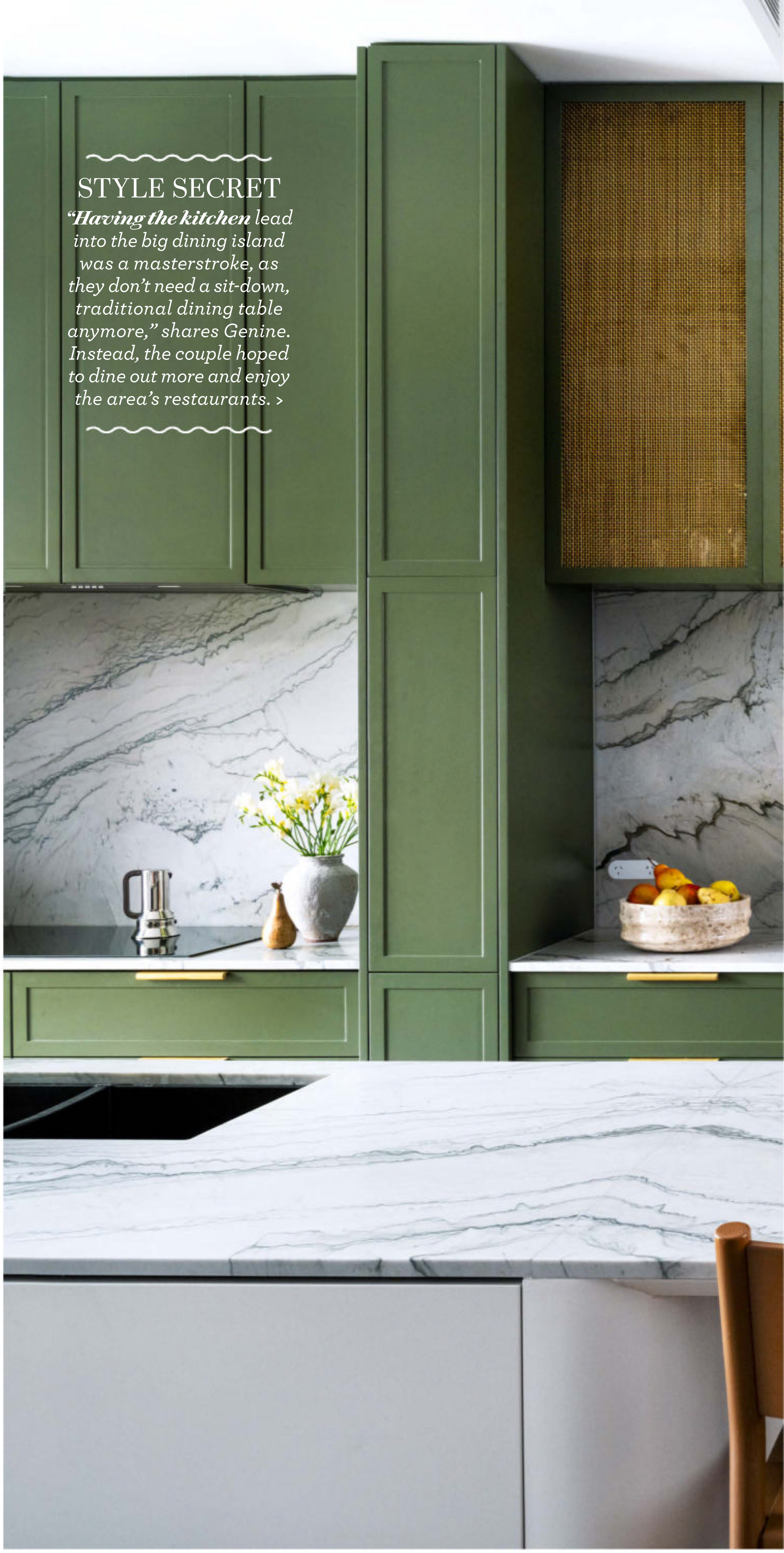
To achieve the number of bedrooms and bathrooms Sandi and Darren desired, they converted rooms and added a studio. “There were quite a lot of layout changes, so it involved a DA,” says Genine, who designed the personality-filled interiors while awaiting council approval.

“My ethos was to bring out the best of the heritage features and not waste what worked,” says Genine. She kept the old floors, giving the boards a fresh sand and stain, retained the charming French doors and period fireplaces, painstakingly replaced damaged skirtings, and added new joinery and contemporary comforts.

Issues with damp meant the renovation became part-restoration. “Any renovation will present many challenges – one was putting a bathroom on the first floor, which had never had a bathroom, and it’s always a challenge bringing air conditioning into an old terrace,” says Genine. But the effort was worth it – the restored home is a haven of form and function. “It works perfectly,” says Sandi.

Kitchen *“The first thing we locked down was the colour of the kitchen,” says Genine of the joinery in Dulux Algae. She defined the bar area with Arrow Metal brass mesh and used Bianco Satinato quartzite from SNB Stone on the benchtops and splashback. Atop the old mantle, Sandi hung an artwork by Jane Garrett of her girls when they were younger.*

Before

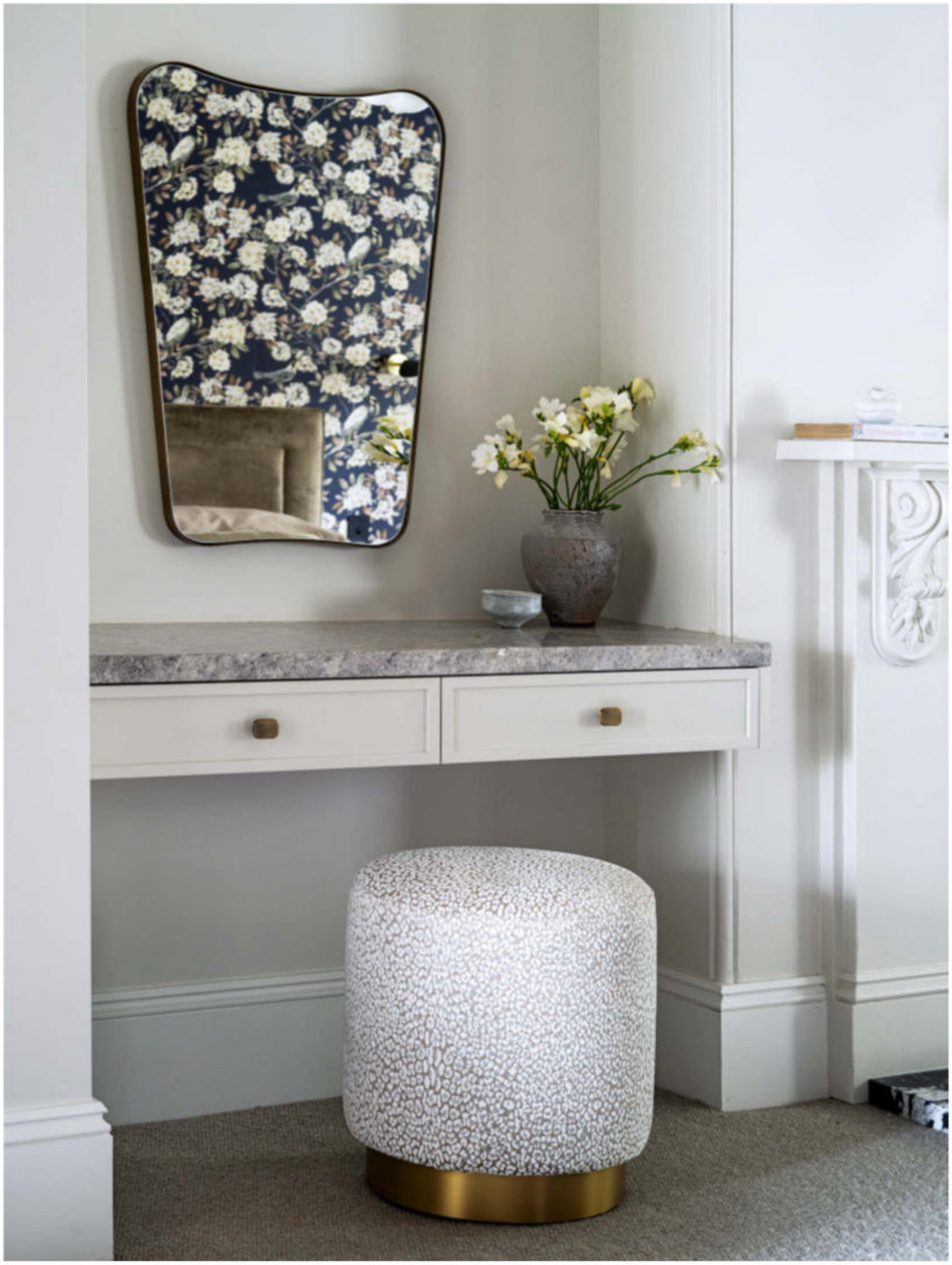


STYLE SECRET

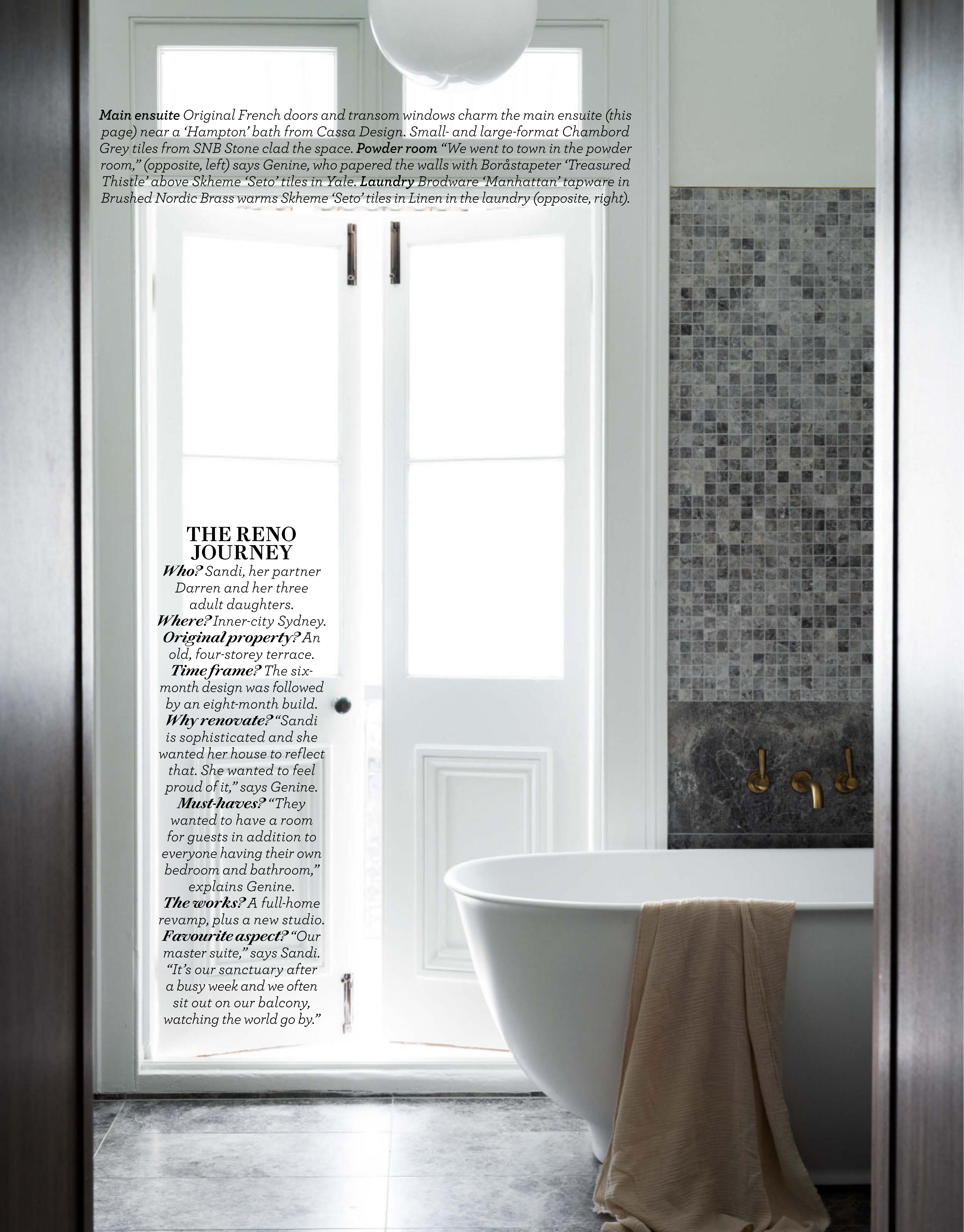
“Having the kitchen *lead into the big dining island was a masterstroke, as they don’t need a sit-down, traditional dining table anymore,” shares Genine. Instead, the couple hoped to dine out more and enjoy the area’s restaurants. >*

ROOM REFRESH

*“**We knocked a** walkway between two bedrooms and that became the couple’s master ensuite, ’robes and bedroom – that was a big transformation,” shares Genine. “Behind that wallpaper is Darren’s walk-in wardrobe.”*



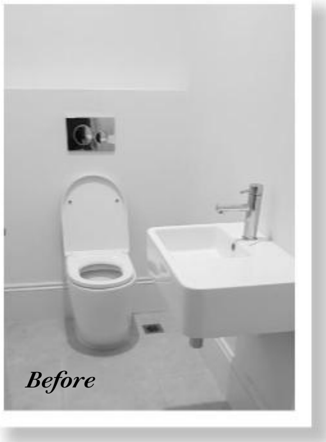
Main bedroom *"Our master suite, which is on its own floor, incorporates a walk-in robe, loads of storage and our stunning ensuite," says Sandi. Genine designed handbag and shoe storage, a dressing area and make-up station for the lady of the house (this page), which is topped with classic Chambord Grey limestone from SNB Stone. An ottoman in Catherine Martin 'Leopardo' fabric by Mokum is a pretty perch. For similar, try Kate Nixon 'Palazzo' ottoman. "The joinery really tells a story," says Genine. "Sandi and her daughters love their fashion – they're feminine, beautiful women." She combined two first-floor bedrooms to create the couple's generous suite (opposite), which is dressed to impress with Bethany Linz 'Victoria' wallpaper by Milton & King. The Mokum 'Vintage Deux' velvet bedhead introduces texture, along with Bremworth 'Samurai' carpet and James Dunlop 'Kyoto' curtains in Willow.* >



Main ensuite *Original French doors and transom windows charm the main ensuite (this page) near a 'Hampton' bath from Cassa Design. Small- and large-format Chambord Grey tiles from SNB Stone clad the space.* ***Powder room*** *"We went to town in the powder room," (opposite, left) says Genine, who papered the walls with Boråstapeter 'Treasured Thistle' above Skheme 'Seto' tiles in Yale.* ***Laundry*** *Brodware 'Manhattan' tapware in Brushed Nordic Brass warms Skheme 'Seto' tiles in Linen in the laundry (opposite, right).*

THE RENO JOURNEY

Who? *Sandi, her partner Darren and her three adult daughters.*
Where? *Inner-city Sydney.*
Original property? *An old, four-storey terrace.*
Time frame? *The six-month design was followed by an eight-month build.*
Why renovate? *"Sandi is sophisticated and she wanted her house to reflect that. She wanted to feel proud of it," says Genine.*
Must-haves? *"They wanted to have a room for guests in addition to everyone having their own bedroom and bathroom," explains Genine.*
The works? *A full-home revamp, plus a new studio.*
Favourite aspect? *"Our master suite," says Sandi. "It's our sanctuary after a busy week and we often sit out on our balcony, watching the world go by."*



Before

Best advice

"The best piece of advice is to hire a professional interior designer to ensure everything is properly planned," says Sandi. For her and Darren, Genine did far more than measuring up spaces and selecting materials – she managed every element of the project, from the order of trades to troubleshooting – and the result speaks for itself. "We absolutely adore living in our newly renovated house – it's our haven," says Sandi.

Lessons learnt

Rare is the renovation that's finished within budget, so Sandi recommends adding a buffer to your building costs. "Renovations, especially in heritage buildings, often involve unforeseen issues, so include contingency funds in your budget," she says. "Old homes can be quirky and have features or challenges that need to be addressed. As our joiner discovered, there were very few straight walls in our house."

SOURCE BOOK

Interior design *Studio Noakes, studionoakes.com.*
Joiner *New Edge Kitchens & Joinery, newedgekitchens.com.au.*
Builder *A Cut Above Constructions, acutaboveconstructions.com.au.* HB

RENOVATION NEWS

ON THE TOOLS

The latest collections and great new materials to enhance your home

EDITED BY **ALICE IERACE & KATE BARBER**

HEAVEN SENT

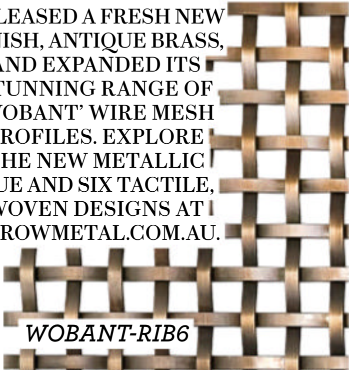
Caesarstone has added new designs to its 'Icon' collection of crystalline silica-free surfaces, and we're on cloud nine over Celestial Sky (pictured), which takes its colour cues from Calacatta marble with warm grey and earthy brown veining. Visit caesarstone.com.au.

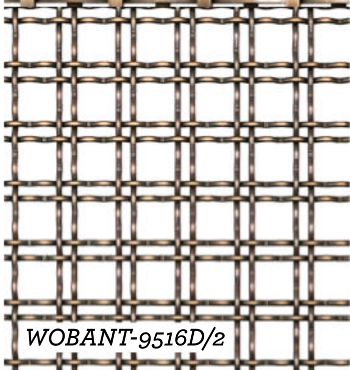
BACK *to* BASICS

HANDCRAFTED FROM CLAY, THE 'ORIGINAL CERAMIC TILE' COLLECTION BY FIRECLAY TILE HAS HAD A COLOUR REFRESH, WITH NINE NEW GLAZES ADDED (PICTURED). THE TILES COME IN GLOSS AND MATTE, PLUS FOUR OXIDE STAINS, AND YOU CAN SOURCE THEM IN 40 DIFFERENT SIZES SO THEY SUIT ANY PROJECT, BIG OR SMALL. TO SEE THE FULL RANGE OF COLOURS, VISIT FIRECLAYTILE.COM.

CROSSED WIRES

PERFECT FOR BRINGING FLAIR TO YOUR DRAWER AND CUPBOARD FRONTS, ARROW METAL HAS RELEASED A FRESH NEW FINISH, ANTIQUE BRASS, AND EXPANDED ITS STUNNING RANGE OF 'WOBANT' WIRE MESH PROFILES. EXPLORE THE NEW METALLIC HUE AND SIX TACTILE, WOVEN DESIGNS AT ARROWMETAL.COM.AU.


WOBANT-RIB6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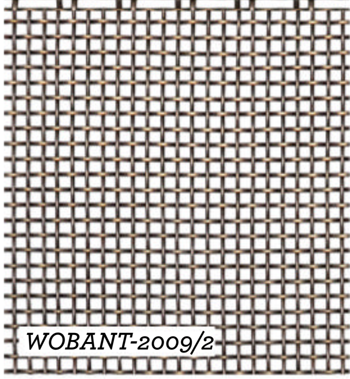
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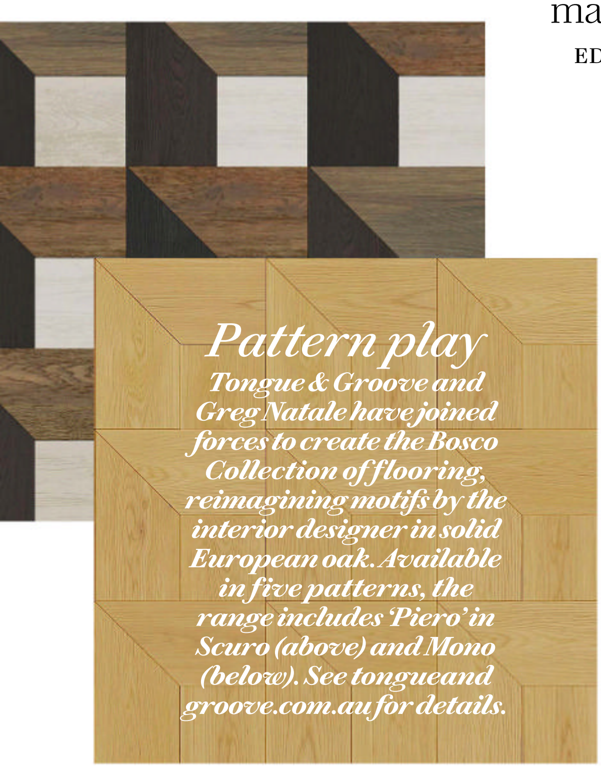
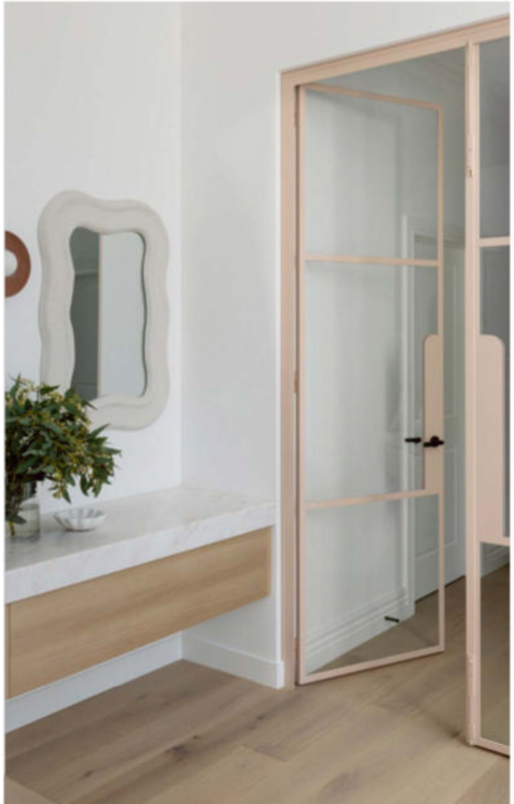


Pattern play

Tongue & Groove and Greg Natale have joined forces to create the Bosco Collection of flooring, reimagining motifs by the interior designer in solid European oak. Available in five patterns, the range includes 'Piero' in Scuro (above) and Mono (below). See tongueandgroove.com.au for details.



Fresh coat

Thought steel-framed doors and windows only come in black or charcoal? Well, think again. Offerings from Steel Window Design can be powder-coated with your chosen hue. These divine doors (left) create an elegant point of difference in Dulux Pink Sand. See steelwindowdesign.com.au for more.

PHOTOGRAPHY (STEEL WINDOW DESIGN) **ELISE SCOTT** INTERIOR DESIGN (STEEL WINDOW DESIGN) **NORSU INTERIORS** ARCHITECT (STEEL WINDOW DESIGN) **HERBERT & HOWES**

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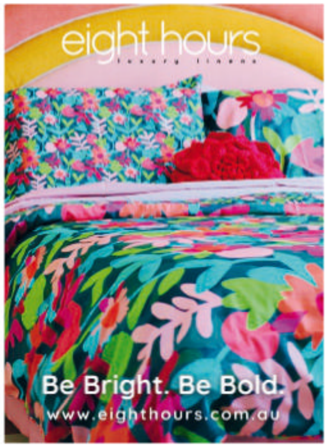
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